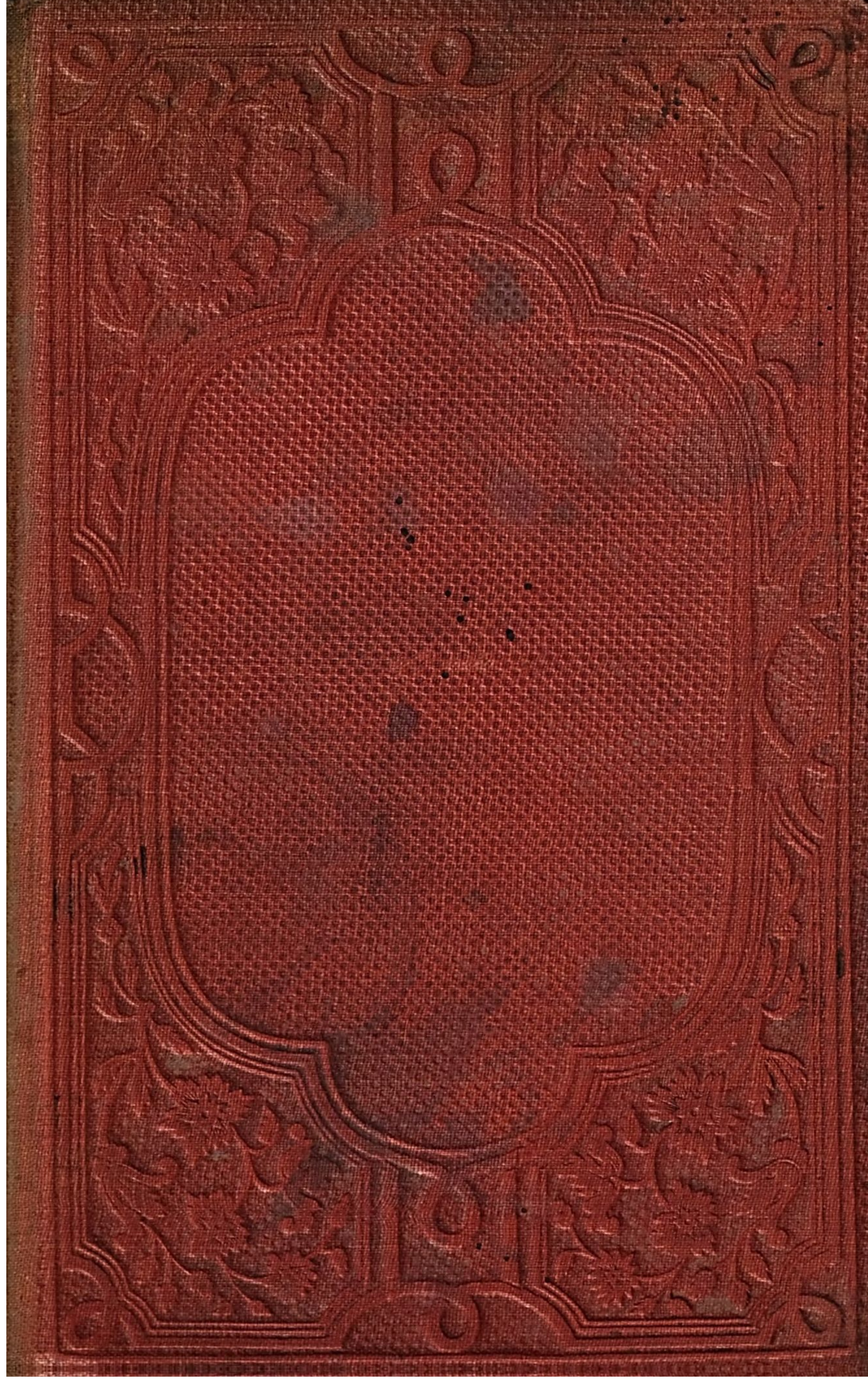






21

Aus der  
Büchersammlung des Capitäns  
Th. Dempster Gordon.

Geschenk des k. Forstrathes G. Dürig  
an die k. Bibliothek.

Langl

o.  
69<sup>c</sup>-

















*Drawn by Francis Varis. J.H.Sc.*

VIEW OF ARNMORIE.



DUNALAN.

THE DUNALAN FOR JUDGE.

BY GRACE KENNEDY.

WITH A PREFACE BY "FATHER OF THE DUNALAN," ETC.

SEVENTH EDITION.

NEW YORK: OLIPHANT AND SONS.

12, NASSAU ST., ADAMS AND CO.

MDCCCLIV.







# DUNALLAN:

OR,

KNOW WHAT YOU JUDGE.

By GRACE KENNEDY,

AUTHOR OF 'THE DECISION,' 'FATHER CLEMENT,' ETC.

SEVENTH EDITION.

EDINBURGH: WILLIAM OLIPHANT AND SONS.

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS AND CO.

---

MDCCCLIV.



MURRAY AND GIBB, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.





# DUNALLAN.

---

## CHAPTER I.

‘Oh, gentle sleep! thou art, indeed, frightened away,’ exclaimed Catharine Dunallan, after a night spent in vain efforts to attain that repose which had seldom before deserted her, and to banish from her thoughts the idea of the approaching day. On that day, she was, for the first time since her childhood, to see her destined husband. He was her relation, though a distant one, and heir to her father’s title, which descended only in the male line. To preserve this title, and the estates of both families undivided, had been equally the ambition of Catharine’s father and of the father of her destined husband.

Lord Dunallan had obtained a promise from his daughter, when very young, to agree to his wishes on this subject. She had then loved him with all the ardour of nearly undivided affection, and would readily have promised anything he had chosen to ask; but as her understanding improved, and she found that in the society, limited as it was, in which her father permitted her to mix, she liked and disliked with almost equal warmth, she became painfully aware of the selfishness and injustice which had induced him thus to sacrifice, perhaps, the whole happiness of his only child to his own ambitious views; and she looked forward with dread to an event which would unite her for ever to a being she might detest; yet she loved her father so tenderly that it was painful to her to indulge a thought injurious to him. The evil day, too, had always seemed at a distance, for the young Dunallan had been long abroad,



and, during wars and revolutions, had found means to travel through countries where few peaceful travellers had dared to venture. His love for this wandering life had seemed to increase; and Catharine, who knew that his father had obtained a similar promise from him, to that which she had given to Lord Dunallan, suspected in secret, that repugnance to this unchosen marriage was the cause of his banishing himself from his country. At last, however, his father was taken dangerously ill. Dunallan was written for—instantly hastened home, and arrived in time to soothe the last hours of his parent.

Lord Dunallan wrote to his young relative on the death of his father, and soon received an answer to his letter, which concluded thus:—

‘My father’s last moments were disturbed by his anxiety for the completion of a scheme formed by your Lordship and himself, to unite the title and fortunes of our families. He informed me that Miss Dunallan had consented to this union of interests. Urged by him at such a moment, I could have no choice. In six months, therefore, if I live, I shall have the honour of waiting on your Lordship, wherever you choose, to fulfil my part of the engagement.’

Lord Dunallan was extremely displeased with this letter. His pride and affection for his daughter had almost triumphed over his love of family—but old ideas soon returned—it was in human nature, he wisely recollected, particularly in youth, to despise what was easily obtained. He determined to seem less anxious about this first wish of his heart, and then Dunallan would see its advantages. He did not write to him again for some time, then hoped, he said, soon to see his young relation,—he flattered himself he might call him his young friend; but let him come as a friend and relation. His daughter was his companion and solace. The thought of separation was so painful, he wished he could forget it for ever.

To this letter he received no answer till within a few days of the expiration of the six months, when Dunallan announced his intention of waiting on Lord Dunallan early in the ensuing week; and requested, in gentler terms than formerly, though still cold, that in a few weeks Miss Dunallan might be per-



mitted to return with him to Arnmore; or that he might be informed of her wishes, which he should feel himself bound to acquiesce in if possible. 'Business of importance,' added he, 'calls me to London, perhaps abroad, and possibly for years. Wherever duty may call me, however, I beg Miss Dunallan may be assured, that the choice of her own residence shall only require the sanction of her father to secure my assent.'

It would be vain to attempt describing the state of Catharine's feelings during the few days which intervened between that on which her father gave her this letter to read, and the morning of the day on which Dunallan was expected.

'My dreams of happiness have passed away for ever,' thought she, as she slowly dressed; then, throwing open the window to breathe the freshness of the morning, she, for a time, forgot all her griefs while gazing at the scene before her. The sun had just risen. She had seldom seen its first rays before, and the woods, the distant mountains, and still misty lake, appeared more than usually beautiful. Almost unconscious of existence, she watched the brightening scene, till at last recalled to herself by some one softly entering her apartment. She turned round: 'My Elizabeth! how kind! but this is too early. You cannot have recovered from the fatigues of yesterday.'

Her cousin assured her she was perfectly recovered; and having heard her window opened, she suspected that sleep had equally forsaken both. 'And you know, dear Catharine,' added she, 'you promised if I would go quietly to bed last night, you would satisfy my curiosity completely this morning; so now, we shall have two hours to converse about everything before a creature is awake.'

'Oh! Elizabeth, everything I have to converse about is disagreeable. I cannot find an idea to rest upon that is not painful. Even that scene (pointing from the window), even that is painful, for it reminds me of the cause of my being obliged to become for ever the companion of a man who regards our union with repugnance; whose affections are probably possessed by another; and whose character, even if that is not the case, is just what I detest. Oh! that I could give him those woods and fields without myself. I should find nature beautiful



anywhere, were I only free ; and how many thousand times more valuable should I esteem the heart which I could win, were I a portionless girl.'

Elizabeth sighed, but remained silent for a moment. 'Tell me, dear Catharine,' said she, 'why is Mr Dunallan's character so disagreeable to you ? and why did you never mention this in your late letters to me ?'

'Because—I cannot very well tell why. There is just a something in all I hear of him that I dislike. You know, Elizabeth, of the letters he wrote to my father—so stiff, so formal, and cold, I thought them quite insulting.'

'It is plain,' replied Elizabeth, 'that he feels himself forced to marry, and that he spurns this force upon his inclinations ; but, dear Catharine, I do not feel very anxious about this. When he sees and knows you, he will love his father's memory for the very thing he now most revolts at.'

'Dear Elizabeth, has my father been tutoring you ? You use his very words ; and when you use them, I will say they are very foolish. Can you think that a man who has been travelling all over Europe—in France, Italy, Poland, in short, wherever agreeable women are to be met with—will find a simple country girl, who has scarcely ever associated with any but neighbours as simple as herself, so irresistibly charming ? Particularly, too, when that girl is so prejudiced against him, that any agreeable qualities she may have will be invisible ; for you know, my face betrays all my feelings ?'

'I know, my dear Catharine, that this very expressiveness of countenance, which makes you unable to conceal anything, is the very charm which I think irresistible.'

'Particularly when my face will say, "Mr Dunallan, you are hateful to me, and have been so for years."'

'But tell me why he is so hateful to you ; and why have you been so secret with me on this subject ?'

'Well, I will ; but I have so much to tell you I do not know where to begin. I am sure, however, you will feel as I do when you know all. You remember when I was a child, and he a boy about fourteen, that he then disliked me, and we quarrelled continually.'



‘But, Catharine, you surely cannot allow yourself to be prejudiced by what passed then: you a spoiled, self-willed, domineering little girl; and he a thoughtless, rambling boy.’

‘Never thoughtless, Elizabeth; always solemn and considerate, even then. I do not, however, form my opinion of him on such trifling grounds; I only remind you of this, to show you that naturally we do not suit each other; for even children discover what is agreeable to them in other children. Think what you choose about that, however, I have enough besides to tell you. I ought to begin, I believe, by informing you that he professes being extremely religious, much more so than other people, and is very gloomy and strict. He is called the “Saint of Arnmore,” by the gentlemen of his own county. You shall judge whether his actions are quite consistent with these pretensions. You know, I believe, how uncommonly tender his father’s affection was for him; yet nothing would prevail on Dunallan to remain at home. I myself heard the old gentleman say, that he had entreated him only to name his wishes, and that he would consent to them. He offered him his largest estate, or both estates, while he himself should only retain a moderate annuity; but not all this eagerness for his society, in his only surviving parent, could induce this cold and self-willed being to remain, even for a few months in the year, at home; and yet he made a disgusting parade of visiting prisons, relieving distress, and representing to the different authorities, wherever he went, the defects and abuses which he detected; while his father, in bad health, and retirement, was left to the care of mercenaries.’

‘Shameful hypocrisy!’ exclaimed Elizabeth. ‘I have heard of his benevolence and charities; and his kindness to myself when a child, and ill treated by your governess, had rather impressed me in his favour, but this trait in his character is indeed very bad.’

‘I have more to tell you, my dear Elizabeth. After his father’s death, Dunallan dismissed every servant in the house, some of whom had lived with old Mr Dunallan for more than twenty years; and did not give the smallest present or reward to any of them, excepting to a very young and pretty girl, who



had only been a few weeks in the house, to whom he gave money, and with it, hypocritical being! a Bible.'

'Shocking! But how do you know all this?'

'From the young girl herself. She came all the way from her father's cottage at Arnmore, to ask me to take her into my service; and very wisely thought that these proofs of Dunallan's partiality would recommend her to me; as, she said, she knew my "Ladyship" was going to be married to Mr Dunallan.'

'And what has become of her?'

'I immediately sent her back to her father. I dreaded extremely that Dunallan should suppose I was making any inquiries respecting him; for though I must feel interested in all I hear of him, I have never sought for any information. All I have heard has been by accident, excepting his opinion of myself, which I believe was purposely left for me to read, by our acquaintance Mrs Lennox.'

'Mrs Lennox! you surely know how to appreciate any thing she says?'

'Oh, certainly I do; but this letter was addressed to her son, and was from Dunallan himself.'

'But Mrs Lennox would do any thing, my dear Catharine, to break off your marriage, in the hope that you might be won by the charms of her stupid George.'

'Yes; but George is very different from his mother, and has no preference for me. I know he is engaged to another, and this letter was the means of putting me in possession of his secret. About two years since, when I was on a visit at Mrs Lennox's, she gave me a book which I had wished to read. In this book I found folded, and laid in, as if for a mark, a sheet of written paper. I had seen the book lying on the breakfast parlour, and it never occurred to me that it could be any thing but a quotation from it: and as I read, I supposed it a character depicted for the use, or rather warning of young ladies, to whom the book was addressed. I almost remember the words, I have thought so often of them since. It began thus,—"She was, when a child, violent and self-willed; careless of all around her if she attained her own object. Unchecked by any one, her faults, from all I hear, have strengthened with her years: and now she



is the opposite of what, in my eyes, is lovely, or loveable in woman. I allow, my friend, that when joined to feminine softness, talents in women are very desirable, and greatly increase their power of charming ; but without that softness, they are very disagreeable to me : in short, I see, and thank you for the kindness of your intentions, but I cannot feel reconciled to my proposed union with Miss Dunallan." Here, my dear Elizabeth, I stopped, as I perceived I had by mistake been reading a letter from — ; it was easy to guess whom. I immediately went in search of Mrs Lennox, and said I had inadvertently read a letter addressed to her son. Before she could possibly have seen what I held in my hand, she exclaimed, "Oh ! what have I done ! You have found Mr Dunallan's letter to George. What shall I do ! George will never forgive me." George fortunately entered the room at that moment ; and, as I saw Mrs Lennox was merely affecting to dread her son's displeasure, I told him of my mistake, showed him what I had read, and assured him, as he really appeared distressed at my having seen this character of myself, that I thought it fortunate I had, as I might correct the faults imputed to me. George took an early opportunity of imparting to me his own views and wishes. He saw his mother's plans for him, and dreaded that I might suspect he had entered into them. I have felt as a sister for George ever since that day : but I must not now spend time in talking of him. Tell me, Elizabeth, do you think it possible for me to look forward to a connection for life with this man, without dread ?'

Elizabeth shook her head, but remained silent.

'I believe,' continued Catharine, 'you agree with me in thinking what I have already told you, sufficient to take away all hopes of happiness from such an union : yet this is not all. I have described him as a son, and as a master ; I have still to make you acquainted with him as a friend and a brother. You have met with Mr Clanmar. You know that he and Dunallan were educated together when boys. They afterwards travelled together in Holland, Germany, and other countries. You have heard that Mr Clanmar, to the inexpressible grief of his friends, brought home a young German lady as his wife, whose character suffered extremely from the suspicious circumstances attending



her marriage : in short, had her first child lived, his legitimacy might have been disputed ; and this marriage was brought about, the Clanmars say, by Dunallan, whose influence over young Clanmar was then unbounded. The young lady is singularly interesting, and was a mere child at the time of her marriage ; so the poor Clanmars are now, in some degree, reconciled to it : but they openly declare they can never regard Mr Dunallan but as the most detestable of hypocrites ; in short, there is something worse than I know in this story, at least there are dreadful suspicions. Young Clanmar, who is universally esteemed as one of the most amiable tempered men in the world, and indeed as very perfect in every way, never mentions Dunallan's name ; and, though formerly so devotedly attached to him, they now have no intercourse whatever.'

'Dear Catharine !' exclaimed Elizabeth, 'is it possible Lord Dunallan knows all this, and yet can suffer you to be united to this man ?'

'Yes, my own Elizabeth, my father knows it all ; but he hates the Clanmars, who have always opposed him in the county, and supposes they have exaggerated these stories. I fear, however, they are too true ; for I can see no reason for people, so remarkable for pride of birth as they are, choosing to exaggerate stories which are disgraceful to the wife of him who will soon be the representative of their boasted family. But now, my Elizabeth, I shall tell you the history of his only sister, as we may be interrupted. She has been dead, you know, about two years, and left two children. She was older than Dunallan, and before he left Oxford, had, with her father's consent, married a young Englishman of family and fortune. It was on Dunallan's quitting Oxford, that he first showed his dislike to living at home ; and he spent much of his time in England, at the house of his brother-in-law, Mr Harcourt. For some time Mr Harcourt continued one of the gayest and most fashionable men about London, but he gamed so deeply, that he very soon ruined his fortune. Dunallan went abroad in less than two years after leaving Oxford, and remained absent, until called to England by Harcourt's entreaties, whose creditors had become very troublesome. He so arranged matters, that Harcourt was permitted



to accept of an appointment in India ; but, ever cold and unfeeling, he compelled his unhappy sister to remain in this country, though separation from her now unfortunate but still beloved Harcourt almost deprived her of existence. Dunallan's command of fortune, however, made him all powerful. Harcourt himself entreated his wife to remain. She died two years afterwards of a broken heart. Her children are with Dunallan, or rather with an aunt of his, whom he has got to superintend his domestic concerns, including me, I suppose. And now Elizabeth, you know his character, tell me, my real friend, what do you think I ought to do? I have given my promise to my father ; I cannot retract it : but if I could delay—if I could induce Mr Dunallan to give up his pursuit. He has the worst opinion of me. What can I do ?'

Elizabeth continued silent for a few moments, then asked her friend whether she thought it quite impossible to change her father's wishes.

'Quite so, my Elizabeth. Ah, if you knew the various means I have tried in vain. I ought not to wish it,' added she, rising, and bursting into tears ; 'I have had many happy years from his kindness ; I ought not to repine at sacrificing the rest of my life to him.'

'Allow me to speak on the subject to Mr Dunallan when he arrives,' said Elizabeth.

'But would that be fulfilling my promise to my father? No, no ; I must go on. Come here, my Elizabeth : look at those woods ; look at those distant mountains, and those soft hills still nearer. Look at that smooth lake, as it reflects its surrounding scenery, and tell me what you feel.'

Elizabeth gazed with admiration at the glorious scene before her, and then replied, 'I feel, Catharine, that I could never be very unhappy with nature around me so sweet, so sublimely beautiful and soothing ; unless I had lost for ever some beloved object, with whom I had enjoyed its charms ; or was, by some insurmountable obstacle, separated from such a friend. I have feared to ask the question, Catharine ; but there is no separation in your case, I fervently pray, which makes an union with Dunallan so dreadful to you.'



‘No, my dear Elizabeth ; you yourself are the dearest friend I have in the world ; and you, I hope, will be more with me than you have of late been. My father has watched over my happiness in this respect. In the limited circle in which he has allowed me to mix, there is no one for whom I feel a preference ; and I agree with you in thinking, that, while I have a heart to feel, and while nature and my friend are left to me, I cannot be quite unhappy. Whatever happens, however, life is not a long affair with any of us ; particularly the miserable,’ added she, her eyes again filling with tears.

Elizabeth threw her arms around her friend, and wept with her, but could find no subject of consolation.

‘Who is this aunt of Dunallan’s ?’ asked she at length.

‘She is the most unfortunate human creature I ever heard of’ replied Catharine ; ‘she has lost her husband, and her whole family of six children. She is talked of as a good sort of woman, but a religious enthusiast. I suppose, poor soul, her misfortunes have affected her understanding, and I feel that I ought to pity her. Yet, what a companion ! Dunallan is equally gloomy and enthusiastic. Oh, my father, what a cruel choice ! As he says of me, he is the complete opposite of what I could ever find it possible to love. But here comes Martin, and I must bid adieu to this subject. My heart feels relieved by conversing with you, my own Elizabeth : but, perhaps, if I am not to appear very unhappy to my father, it will be necessary to avoid, in future, such softening intercourse.’

Elizabeth agreed ; and embracing each other, as if in giving up this soothing confidence, they had given up their last consolation, Elizabeth left her young friend with the wondering Martin, who had come earlier than usual to call her lady on this eventful day.

Martin had suspected, however, that Mr Dunallan’s arrival was no cause of joy to her young mistress. Catharine’s early rising, and the tears in her eyes, confirmed her suspicions, and made her less unwilling to agree to her lady’s determination to wear a very plain morning dress.

Catharine had no desire to please Mr Dunallan. If she could have concealed her face, or deprived it of the power of expression,



she would have been more satisfied. She had an additional cause of uneasiness in the numerous spectators who must witness her feelings. Lord Dunallan, from a dread of his daughter's gentle submissive looks, and melancholy sweetness of manners, which were now the only means she used to induce him to pity her; and perhaps from a dread of his own feelings, when about to part from a child he loved next to his family and name, had invited the neighbouring families in succession for several weeks. To none of them had Catharine imparted her dislike to her approaching marriage; and, though the younger part wondered at their beautiful companion thus agreeing, like one of the royal family, to be united to a person she had scarcely ever seen; and the elder envied the father who had so submissive a child; yet both ascribed this submission to pride, and the same love of family so remarkable in Lord Dunallan. Catharine had perceived this, and the idea of their observing all her actions thus prejudiced, chilled and discouraged her; yet she resolved not to transfer their disapprobation from herself to her father by the slightest hint of the truth.

---

## CHAPTER II.

LORD DUNALLAN was alone in the breakfast room when Catharine entered. He received her with tenderness, kissed her forehead, and pressed her hastily to his bosom; glanced at her pale countenance, then saying he had forgotten something (she did not hear what), he left her: but she heard him sigh deeply, which brought tears into her eyes, and confirmed her determination to conceal from him and every one else the dejection she felt.

Elizabeth soon joined her, and then Mrs Lennox, her son George, and Rose his sister; the St Clairs of the Isle; Sir Archibald and Lady Cameron of Glenmore, their son, and two daughters. *ed*

Every eye during breakfast was turned towards Catharine. Elizabeth endeavoured to divert the attention of the party, by



proposing plans of amusement for the day, and this in some degree succeeded.

‘Miss Dunallan has expressed no preference,’ said young St Clair at last. ‘Miss Dunallan, I know you are fond of riding. Shall we ride?’

‘Oh, no! dear Miss Dunallan,’ exclaimed Rose Lennox, ‘do consent to the sailing party.’

‘But if Catharine prefers riding,’ said Miss Cameron.

‘We can ride first,’ replied Catharine, ‘and then sail. The day is charming; we shall have time for both, if we order the horses immediately.’

The horses were soon ready; and the younger visitors of the party set off, all gay, and in expectation of enjoyment. *She* only was sad, whom each thought had most the power of being happy.

Young St Clair assisted Catharine to mount her horse. He had observed the dejection which she in vain attempted to conceal, and his manner showed her that he had. He put the reins into her hand, but laid his arm on the neck of the horse. ‘He is very gentle,’ said he, stroking him.

‘Yes,’ replied Catharine, ‘he obeys the slightest touch of the reins.’

St Clair looked earnestly but tenderly at Catharine, and said in a low voice, ‘You, Miss Dunallan, will always find it so with all whom you condescend to guide, or lead,—or love,’ added he, in a still lower voice.

Catharine looked languidly away, bowed coldly, and rode on.

Catharine had willingly agreed to the wishes of her young friends, because she hoped she would, while riding or sailing, forget herself and her griefs; but though the day was charming, and her companions increased in gaiety, she could not banish thought, and became every moment more sad.

The lake was smooth, and the air soft and balmy; the surrounding scenery even more than usually beautiful; yet Catharine thought only of her approaching meeting with her hated cousin; and the time they continued to sail seemed tedious, though she dreaded its termination. At last they landed at a short distance from the castle. St Clair offered his arm to



Catharine. Elizabeth walked on her other side, and on turning round a part of the wood, they came in sight of the house, at the entrance to which a travelling carriage had just stopped. Catharine looked eagerly towards it, until she saw a gentleman, of a tall and graceful figure, alight rather slowly from it, and her father advance to meet him. She supposed it was Dunallan, and becoming as pale as death, she involuntarily shrunk back. St Clair, who felt her tremble violently, intreated her to sit down on a garden seat near where they stood. 'We have had such a fatiguing day,' said he, 'I am surprised at any lady having strength for such exertions.' Catharine trembled so excessively, that she was obliged for a few moments to comply with his request. Annoyed, however, by the looks and attention of St Clair, and by the inquiries of the rest of the party, who soon joined them, she struggled to regain composure, and leaning on Elizabeth's arm, again proceeded towards the house. St Clair intreated her to lean on him, but she coldly declined his offer, and looking back for Rose Lennox, who instantly came to her, put her arm within hers, and in a whisper begged her to remain near her.

Lord Dunallan and the stranger now approached. Catharine dared not to raise her eyes, but became very pale, and trembled violently.

*er* 'It is Mr Dunallan,' whispered Elizabeth; 'I recollect him perfectly. He looks very mild.' Catharine remained silent. The rest of the party were walking before, and Lord Dunallan first introduced Dunallan to them, then approaching. 'Catharine, my love, your cousin. Elizabeth, you remember Mr Dunallan.' Catharine looked up for a moment; Dunallan's eyes were fixed upon her; hers fell under his, and she blushed deeply. She felt ashamed of the appearance of bashful timidity, which she was conscious must be the impression her silence and blushes would convey to Dunallan; yet she could not speak; but recollecting all she had heard of him, and her own situation, contempt, pride, and dislike of his character regained their influence; and, though silent, she walked on with her head raised, and her eyes looking down with an expression of great haughtiness. Dunallan entered into conversation with Elizabeth. The



very tone of his voice was disagreeable to Catharine, because so different from what she expected it to be, from the person she had so long pictured in her imagination. It was singularly mild and low.

‘I have travelled in so many climates, and been exposed to such scorching suns, that I am surprised and flattered at your recollecting me, Miss Murray; yet I believe it is the expression of a friend’s countenance we remember. I should have known you also, had I seen you smile.’

‘And Miss Dunallan, should you have known her?’ asked Elizabeth.

‘I believe not;’ then looking past Elizabeth for a moment, ‘Yes, Miss Dunallan is less changed than I thought, the first moment I had the pleasure of seeing her.’

Catharine pressed Elizabeth’s arm; for Dunallan breathed a short sigh after saying this.

Elizabeth was not surprised at his sigh, when she looked at Catharine; for she had no idea her friend could look so little agreeable.

They walked on for a short way in silence. Dunallan then remarked the improvements which had taken place around Dunallan Castle during his absence.

‘Can you admire our poor Scotland, after having visited Italy and Switzerland?’ asked Elizabeth.

‘Since I left Scotland I have seen no scenery *to me* more beautiful than what now surrounds me,’ replied Dunallan; ‘that at Arnmor only surpasses it,’ added he, smiling.

‘Yours is a very happy taste, Mr Dunallan,’ said Catharine, in rather an ironical tone of voice.

‘Is it so unfortunate as to differ from yours, Miss Dunallan?’

‘I certainly have never seen any place I preferred to Dunallan Castle,’ replied Catharine; ‘but I have never been out of Scotland, and imagine I should admire the scenery of some other countries still more, unless their describers greatly flatter them.’

‘I believe,’ answered Dunallan, ‘that even after you have seen those countries, you will not condemn my taste.’

Catharine made no reply.



The party soon reached the house, and as it was late, separated to dress for dinner. Catharine followed Elizabeth to her room.

‘Well, my dear Elizabeth, you see we have differed in opinion already.’

‘Yes, dear Catharine; but I must have you to lay aside that expression of haughtiness, and that contemptuous tone of voice. You provoke hostility.’

‘But I cannot help it, Elizabeth; and I confess you surprise me by entering so cordially into conversation with a person who you know has so many faults, and of whom you yourself expressed so bad an opinion before you met.’

‘I really had forgotten for a time, what you told me, dear Catharine, there is something so singularly sincere and pleasing in his looks and manner.’

‘I have not looked at him yet,’ replied Catharine, ‘and cannot so soon forget his father, or his sister, or his friend; but good bye, Elizabeth, I wish I *could* forget, and feel some of the complacency for him which you do.’

When Catharine entered the drawing-room before dinner, she found most of the party assembled. A glance around the room, however, told her that Dunallan was not there. She felt relieved, and joined Mrs Lennox and others, who were examining some prints which Lord Dunallan had just received from London. Catharine accepted of a seat placed for her by St Clair, who protested against her standing after having suffered so much from fatigue. As the prints were in a large volume, it was impossible to see them when sitting. St Clair and young Cameron therefore supported the book, so as to place the prints in an advantageous situation. Lady Cameron and Mrs St Clair chose to stand behind Catharine. Elizabeth, Rose, and the others, also stood near her; while she, thrown back in her chair, scarcely conscious of what passed, languidly expressed her opinion, which was constantly appealed to by all the party. Dunallan entered during this scene. Catharine did not immediately change her attitude, but turned her eyes towards the door. Dunallan stood for a moment near the party, then, with a look of displeasure, turned away, and joined Lord Dunallan,



who was standing in a window, absorbed in his own thoughts. Catharine felt her face glow, and leant forward to conceal it. Dunallan's was the same indignant glance which she used to dread when a child, because she always knew she deserved it. Now she was unconscious of its cause. She soon, however, recollected his opinion of her ; proud, selfish, spoiled by prosperity ; and she supposed her looks conveyed to him these impressions, surrounded by adulation as she was at that moment. 'But what right has he,' thought she, 'to restrain or to dictate to me?' She raised her head, and again leaning back in her chair, began to talk to St Clair, who, all animation and attention, watched and read her expressive countenance.

'Have you seen those prints, Mr Dunallan?' asked his Lordship, approaching the table.

Dunallan followed slowly, and stood behind Rose.

'Beautiful!' exclaimed Catharine, when the next print was shown. 'Beautiful!' exclaimed every one except Dunallan.

'Mr Dunallan, do you not think it beautiful?' asked Rose.

'I have seen the original painting,' replied Dunallan, and I think the print might have been much better.'

'I too have seen the original painting,' said St Clair, 'but must still agree with Miss Dunallan in thinking the print exquisitely fine.'

Dunallan was silent.

Another print was shown.

'That is surely very fine,' said Rose. 'To me it appears beautiful.'

'It is so,' said Dunallan, 'and does justice to the painting from which it has been taken.'

'Particularly that part,' remarked Catharine, pointing to the foreground, which was very unmeaning.

'No,' replied Dunallan, in a calm voice, 'but the painter of that piece is famous for his distances, while his foregrounds are always defective. Miss Lennox's taste is perfectly correct in admiring that part of the print to which she pointed.'

'Oh,' said Rose, 'Catharine and I are both right.'

Many more prints were turned over, but Catharine gave no opinion ; and St Clair seemed so much inclined to dispute what-



ever Dunallan said, that she felt quite relieved when dinner was announced.

The day passed on. Catharine felt constrained by being conscious that she was observed by every one. She dreaded that her looks should betray her feelings. She wished to appear not unhappy to her father; yet, in making this attempt, she feared that the calm, and, as she thought, very proud-looking Dunallan, might suppose she was pleased with her future prospects, which she felt became more alarming to her every time she ventured to think. These contending feelings gave to her countenance an expression of abstraction and uneasiness; while her indifference and careless answers to those around her, by whom she was accustomed to be treated with a deference and attention which had unconsciously led her to disregard all they said, gave her the appearance of a dissatisfied spoiled child. Her eyes often met Dunallan's, and each time the expression of his seemed to increase in disapprobation, and she thought even in contempt. Catharine felt this extremely. Adulation, endeavours to soothe if she was out of temper, and solicitude to discover her wishes, she was always accustomed to, and scarcely perceived; but, excepting from Elizabeth, or her own heart, she seldom saw a look, or heard a word of reproof. Every family in the neighbourhood had wished, in some way, to connect her with them. Of high birth, and immense fortune, very beautiful, and, in general, amiable in temper, she was indisputably the most charming and most admired young lady in that part of the country. Her father's intention of uniting her to her cousin was well known; but, at the same time, all who were acquainted with her character supposed, that, though disengaged affections, and pride of family, might lead her to agree to her father's wishes before she saw the person proposed, that if she disliked him, nothing would induce her to proceed. Dunallan's long absence, and Lord Dunallan's ill-concealed displeasure, had increased their hopes. Mrs Lennox felt certain that George, from the affectionate manner in which Catharine treated him, was not indifferent to her. The St Clairs thought their Arthur irresistible, where there was no other engagement; and so did St Clair, who was extremely handsome, and almost as



much admired by the ladies as Catharine was by the other sex. Poor young Cameron was too modest to think himself worthy of such an angel; yet every gentle look she bestowed on him was the foundation of a day dream,—so delightful, that its demolition by her next look of total indifference equalled it in wretchedness. He lingered still near her, though he a thousand times determined to separate himself as far as the antipodes from her bewitching smiles, and killing indifference. His mother knew of his attachment, and endeavoured to gain Catharine's confidence by every gentle and winning method, and to recommend her son, by her constant praises of his excellence as a son and a brother. The Miss Camerons looked up to Catharine as the model of all perfection, and paid her the deference of the heart. Mrs Lennox flattered her. Rose really loved, and was really loved by her. Lord Dunallan was quite satisfied, however, that none of these young men, nor their friends, had made any impression on Catharine's heart; and felt rather gratified that Dunallan should see the devotion of these families, the heirs of whom each possessed fortunes twice as large as his. Lord Dunallan watched Catharine's looks on this day. She saw that he did; and also that he was anxious to make all go on smoothly. But it would not do. St Clair seemed to watch every opportunity of disputing with Dunallan, or of making him appear ridiculous, which, from his natural quickness, and very frequently exercised talent for satire, he generally found himself able to do whenever he attempted it with others. Dunallan's calmness, his temperate replies, and his unmoved politeness, were however too much for St Clair, and he evidently lost his temper.

'Let us have some music, my love,' said Lord Dunallan to his daughter. 'Mr Dunallan, I suppose, prefers Italian to any other.'

'No, my Lord, I prefer Scotch,' said Dunallan.

'Indeed! Is it possible for one who has travelled to preserve a taste so simple?'

'My taste is very simple, my Lord. In music I prefer that with which I can associate some pleasing idea.'

'And is Scotland so happy as to have inspired your most pleasing ideas, Mr Dunallan?' asked St Clair with affected simplicity.



‘More so than Italy, at least,’ replied Dunallan.

‘There is a charm, to be sure, in the idea of *home* to every one,’ said St Clair.

Dunallan for the first time seemed moved. ‘I did not say *home*,’ replied he. ‘You, Mr St Clair, know I could not *mean* it.’

There was an expression of so much pain, as well as displeasure, in Dunallan’s countenance, when he said this, that Catharine felt touched. She addressed him in a gentle tone of voice, and, though he did not instantly regain his composure, they soon entered into conversation. They talked first about music, and Catharine played and sung whatever he wished. He continued near her during the rest of the evening, and though in conversation he often differed from her in opinion, and his looks expressed less of that pleasure and admiration with which she was generally listened to, than curiosity, and a wish to read her mind in her countenance, yet she felt, when they parted for the night, that his look was not one of disapprobation.

‘I will not stay a moment with you, dear Catharine,’ said Elizabeth, following her into her apartment, ‘for you are quite worn out; only tell me in one word, are you not more pleased than you expected?’

‘You need not be so careful of me, dear Elizabeth, I shall not soon sleep.’

‘Well: but answer me.’

‘I cannot answer you, Elizabeth. He is quite different from what I expected.’

‘Do not you find him very agreeable in manner?’

‘Oh! agreeable and polished enough to make me certain he will despise my defects.’

‘Ridiculous! your defects, Catharine. But good night. I see you think as I do.’

Catharine again declared she could not sleep. But Elizabeth insisted on leaving her; and though at first a thousand confused and interesting thoughts kept her awake, they soon assumed the form of dreams, and these were lost in more profound sleep.



## CHAPTER III.

NEXT morning at breakfast, Lord Dunallan said, that if his friends would excuse him, he wished to pay a visit in the neighbourhood, which would detain him all the forenoon, and he was anxious before his departure, to discover whether there was any plan of amusement arranged for the day. Every one declared they would find amusement for themselves, and begged his Lordship to take no charge of them.

‘Catharine, my love,’ said Lord Dunallan, ‘you will show your cousin the additions I have made to the library.’ This particular charge of her cousin committed to Catharine, brought a blush over her countenance, and an expression of displeasure.

Dunallan looked for her answer. She only bowed her assent very coldly.

‘I believe, my Lord, I ought to relieve Miss Dunallan from this task, and accompany your Lordship part of the way. I wish to call on my young friend Clanmar.’

‘Clanmar!’ exclaimed Catharine, quite thrown off her guard by surprise.

Dunallan looked for an explanation. Catharine blushed deeply. ‘I thought—I supposed—I did not know—I had been led to believe’—and she stopped.

‘I believe I understand you, Miss Dunallan. You had been led to believe that Mr Clanmar had reason to think himself injured by me, under the mask of friendship.’

Catharine blushed again still more deeply, but was silent. There was something about Dunallan that quite deprived her of all presence of mind. Every look, every word he uttered, every expression of his open and animated countenance, was in direct contradiction to the character she had formed of him in idea; and his plain avowal of the truth on this occasion left her unable to say a word. She was relieved by Mrs Lennox, who said, ‘One hears such stories of all one’s friends, that it is necessary to believe absolutely nothing.’

‘Would it not be better, Mrs Lennox,’ asked Dunallan, ‘to



discover from our friends themselves whether there is any truth in such stories? If there is, our advice may be of use; if not, we may put our friend on his guard, or assist him in disproving them.'

'Your theory is beautiful, Mr Dunallan,' said Mrs Lennox, 'but I fear impracticable; for the first consequence of telling a friend that such a one said so and so of him, would be a challenge; and I believe Mr Dunallan is an enemy to duelling.'

'Certainly,' replied Dunallan, 'but it is not necessary to mention names on such an occasion.'

'But,' said Mrs Lennox, 'I should doubt the truth of what was told me; particularly,' added she, laughing, 'if it detracted from my own merits, unless I was informed who said it, and all about it, every way.'

'I did not advert to being disbelieved, I confess,' replied Dunallan, smiling. 'I have yet to learn how to act upon such an occasion.'

'But the situation of gentlemen and ladies is entirely different,' rejoined Mrs Lennox; 'we stand in no awe of duels; so we can politely insinuate that we suspect there has been some misstatement, some mistake of names or persons,—oh, a hundred ways, which by degrees brings us to the bottom of everything. I am pretty certain I could discover even Mr Dunallan's authorities, if he told me some evil story he had heard of me.'

Dunallan declined entering the lists with so dangerous a person, and retired with Lord Dunallan, who seemed rather anxious to depart. Catharine felt relieved by his absence; and after she had engaged the rest of the party in such amusements as suited their different tastes, she retired with Elizabeth to converse with her about Dunallan, and her own hopes and fears respecting the future.

This and several other days passed away without apparently producing much difference in the feelings of any of the party. Lord Dunallan continued to press his visitors to prolong their stay, and Catharine joined her entreaties, from a dread of the party becoming so small as to force a more intimate intercourse with Dunallan, whom she found every hour more difficult to understand, and whose presence was a continual restraint to



her, because, though she hardly avowed it to herself, she dreaded his opinion, and was conscious that of her it very often was unfavourable: but though he so frequently differed from her, and even in what she esteemed trifles, showed that difference of opinion; yet he was uniformly so gentle and polite in his manner, that she could not make herself believe he wished to offend. A thousand times in a day she would say to herself, 'Why do I dread his disapprobation? Let him disapprove, let him abandon this heartless, interested engagement; let him despise me, and leave me in peace.' Yet the next time she joined in conversation, or gave her opinion, her eye involuntarily glanced towards Dunallan; and if he was of the same opinion, or seemed pleased with what she had said, she felt a lightness of heart which led her on to speak, until she had said something, or laughed at, or joined in ridiculing some opinion or person undeserving of such treatment; and then Dunallan's grave expression, when every one else laughed, made her uneasy, and unable to enjoy anything that passed.

'That stern cast-down of his eyes—that fixedly grave look, when we are only amusing ourselves,' said she to Elizabeth, 'is such a reflection upon us all, even upon my father, it is quite intolerable.'

'Mr St Clair is to blame, however,' replied Elizabeth, 'for those reproving looks. He knows Mr Dunallan's strict way of thinking about ridicule, and religion, and some other things; yet he always contrives to introduce these subjects into conversation in the very way to provoke Mr Dunallan's grave looks; and I think you must allow, Catharine, that Mr Dunallan has always the just side in an argument, and leaves Mr St Clair without a word to advance but some silly piece of sophistry, or foolish jest, which only discovers the weakness of the side he has taken.'

'But St Clair is never serious,' replied Catharine, 'he only wishes to amuse us, while Mr Dunallan is always so grave, and so full of wisdom, and seems so anxious to lead the conversation to wiser subjects.'

'True,' replied Elizabeth, 'but indeed, Catharine, I greatly prefer his conversation to Mr St Clair's. I find it much more



interesting. You know I have always found those men most agreeable, who treated us women most like equals and rational creatures. You, my dear Catharine, have been more accustomed to flattery, and admiring deference of opinion from the other sex than I have, and of course will feel the total want of this in Dunallan more than I do.'

'No, Elizabeth, it is not that foolish flattery I regret; but I am not accustomed to contemptuous and disapproving looks; and I confess I do feel them,' added she, bursting into tears.

'My dearest Catharine, you entirely mistake his looks. You generally rely on what I say; and I declare that were I asked what I thought his feelings for you were, I would say, that he already felt deeply interested, and even tenderly for you.'

'Dear Elizabeth,' exclaimed Catharine, rising, and speaking with much emotion, 'what an idea! For once you think as you wish. Feel tenderly! Is watching every word I say, in general to differ from me, tenderness? Was that remark he made to me this morning, that young women of fortune seemed to forget they were responsible creatures, tenderness? He seems to consider me a spoiled child, an useless being, guided by no principle, but at the mercy of my own caprice. Oh, Elizabeth! I see he despises me: and he has taught me to despise myself; for I feel, on reflection, that his opinion of me is not unjust.'

'I still think you quite mistaken, however,' replied Elizabeth, 'in the opinion you suppose he has formed of you. You remember the description he gave the other evening of a lady, a friend of his, Mrs Henry Williams?'

'Perfectly; and I remember his looks when he turned to me while describing her; they said, "Attend, silly girl; compare your aimless, trifling, useless life, with that of this truly virtuous, and religious, and marvellously active wife, and daughter, and mother, and friend, and sister, and everything!" I shall be introduced to this paragon, Elizabeth; she lives near Arnmore; and I suppose Dunallan means me to regard her as my model, with her schools, and cares for the poor, "which," as he said, "did not consist in merely giving them money, without inquiring into their temporal, and still more important concerns." Oh, I remember his very words!'



‘But, dear Catharine, what can you condemn in his words?’

‘Oh, nothing! I wish I could.’

‘But, Catharine, I was going to tell you what he said of you.’

‘Of me?’

‘Yes. After describing Mrs Henry Williams, he turned to me, and said in reply to my admiring praises of her character, “Your cousin, I think, greatly resembles Mrs Williams in her natural disposition, if I have rightly judged from the little I have seen of her; and I think would have probably been a very similar character, had she been educated in the school of adversity, like poor Mrs Williams.”’

‘Is it possible he said this of me?’ asked Catharine eagerly.

‘Precisely as I have repeated it,’ replied Elizabeth.

Catharine remained absorbed in thought for a few moments; then waking from her reverie, she exclaimed, ‘But, Elizabeth, what is become of all the unexplained evil stories we have heard of this same unaccountable Dunallan?—his father, his sister?’

‘Oh, they cannot be true,’ replied Elizabeth; ‘you know the history about Mr Clanmar must be without foundation, since he called here yesterday, and seemed to regard Mr Dunallan with the greatest affection and respect.’

‘He is a mystery altogether,’ said Catharine, gaily. ‘And so I am like Mrs Williams, only I require adversity,’ added she, playfully; ‘perhaps Mr Dunallan may supply this deficiency to me.’

A few evenings after this conversation, Lord Dunallan sent to request his daughter’s company in the library. Catharine dreaded this *tete-a-tete*, but immediately attended her father. She found him surrounded by papers. ‘My dear child,’ said he, ‘come and sit down by me. I wish to consult you on a subject very interesting to both of us. You know the fortune I shall leave you and your cousin, will be immense. I am sure you will join me in thinking that my sister, your Elizabeth’s mother, ought not to suffer inconveniences from the narrowness of her fortune, while we are so affluent. Her children are now advancing in life: and I have been thinking, that to leave each of them an independence would be most agreeable to my sister, who is rather proud on these subjects, but who would not act



contrary to the interests of her children. After your marriage, my love, I shall consider my fortune as a trust for you, therefore'——

'My dearest father,' interrupted Catharine, 'do not speak thus. Follow your own generous wishes. I have never thought of this. My aunt has always appeared comfortable and happy. I knew she was beloved by you. If there is any way of increasing her happiness, I entreat you do not hesitate, or think of the future.'

'How you run on, my Catharine! I never can get you to listen to these subjects; but now, my love, it is your duty to attend to them. The wife or the mother who disregards these matters, may bring ruin and disgrace on those most dear to her. But to return to my sister, here is the letter I have written to her, and the addition I wish to make to the fortunes of her children.'

Catharine read the letter, then said, 'I suppose, my dear father, you mean the sum you have mentioned for each of my cousins.'

'You are very magnificent in your ideas, my love; I mean what I have mentioned as a provision for the whole. Do you approve, my Catharine?'

'Oh, most heartily; but do, my dearest father, make it to each.'

'Pho', child, you are foolish. But I must see Mr Dunallan; after what has passed between his father and me, I think myself accountable to him for the way in which I spend my fortune.'

'I may go, I suppose,' said Catharine, rising.

'No, my love, stay.'

She reluctantly resumed her seat, and Dunallan soon appeared. He was informed of the business by Lord Dunallan.

'I request—I intreat, my Lord, you will never think of consulting me on such matters, nor suppose for a moment that I am capable of desiring to control your Lordship in the manner in which you choose to spend any part, or the whole of your fortune.' He was retiring. Lord Dunallan entreated him to stay.



‘You will greatly oblige me, Mr Dunallan, if you will act as the heir of my fortune—give me your opinion—let me feel that you are satisfied. You are acquainted with what passed between your father and myself. In my situation you would feel as I do, that I cannot alienate any part of my fortune from the husband of my child, without his concurrence. I beg, therefore, that on all occasions you will allow me to consult you respecting my affairs.’

He again offered the letter to Dunallan.

‘Impossible, my Lord,’ said he, drawing back rather coldly, ‘I can interfere no further in your Lordship’s concerns than to say, that, if any transaction passed between you and my father, which your Lordship conceives gives me any title to interfere in the disposal of your fortune, you will allow me to withdraw that title by any act which can do so.’

‘I know of no act, Mr Dunallan,’ replied his Lordship proudly, ‘which can cancel the promises of a man of honour to a friend, after the death of that friend. But it is possible to deprive myself of the pleasure I intended.’

‘My Lord,’ said Dunallan, ‘pardon me. I knew not the nature of the engagement to which you alluded. Command me—I am willing to do precisely as you wish.’

Lord Dunallan seemed unwilling to proceed in the business. Dunallan laid his hand on the letter, and looked for his Lordship’s permission to read it. He bowed coldly. Dunallan perused it carefully, then asked if Lord Dunallan would permit him to add a few words. ‘Certainly,’ replied his Lordship, smiling in reply to Dunallan’s conciliating looks and tone of voice. Dunallan wrote a few words, and then returned the letter to his Lordship, who read the words he had written, and then presented it to Catharine, and said, smiling, ‘I think, my love, Mr Dunallan and you have had some secret communication about this affair.’

Catharine read the words Dunallan had written after the sentence—‘I, therefore, my dear sister, request your acceptance of the provision I have mentioned’—to these he had added, ‘For each of your dear children.’ ‘I hope, my dear father, you will be persuaded by Mr Dunallan,’ said Catharine, eagerly.

‘But, my dear, I must sell an estate to raise this sum.’



‘No, my Lord,’ said Dunallan, ‘that is unnecessary, my father left—but,’ looking at Catharine, ‘your Lordship and I can settle all that at another time.’

Lord Dunallan then proposed walking, as the evening was charming, and they found that the rest of the party had gone out. They walked together for some time, but at last Lord Dunallan recollecting he had something to say to his steward, who had just passed them, he left Catharine to entertain her cousin. She had hitherto carefully avoided being left alone with Dunallan, and the more so because she had observed that he seemed rather anxious to detain her, when, notwithstanding all her care, she did happen to be found alone by him. She now looked in vain for the rest of the party, they were not in sight; and as she had just been admiring the beauty of the evening, and had proposed to her father that they should walk to a particular hill a good way off, she could find no pretext for leaving Dunallan. He offered his arm, and they walked on for a few moments in silence. Catharine dreaded his saying any thing which might advert to their peculiar situation, and searched in her own mind for some subject of conversation as far from it as possible, but could find none. She was relieved from her search by Dunallan, whose first question seemed to say he had been equally anxious to avoid the subject.

‘Do you generally spend the winter at Dunallan Castle, Miss Dunallan?’

‘Yes. We have spent two winters at Edinburgh, but all the other winters of my life have been spent at Dunallan Castle.’

‘Have you found your winters at Edinburgh pass more happily than those at Dunallan Castle?’

‘Not nearly so happily.’

‘Indeed!’

‘No, because on the whole we lived more retiredly at Edinburgh than we do here.’

‘And why so, may I be permitted to ask?’

Catharine hesitated. She could not tell Dunallan what she believed was the true cause—her father’s solicitude to prevent the possibility of her forming any engagement which might prevent their future union. ‘My father’s chief pleasures,’ said



she at last, 'consist in reading and attending to county affairs, and the associates he prefers are either learned men, or those friends who reside in our neighbourhood. In Edinburgh, our society consisted of a few old gentlemen, Sir Hugh Cawdor, Professor B——, Dr L——, and a few others, and one or two of our country neighbours, who went to town because we did.'

'And you tired extremely!'

'I did, because I knew gayer scenes, and society more suited to my taste, might easily have been enjoyed by me, had my father permitted it. Even Elizabeth, who is so much more grave and sensible than I am, used to tire of our evenings at Edinburgh, and laugh at my miserable walks with my duenna, in the Meadows; for we lived in that dull part of the town called George Square.'

Dunallan smiled, and asked 'whether she had never joined in any public amusement?'

'O yes, my father went with me as often as I chose to the theatre; but I tired of the bad actors who are generally to be seen there. Oh I prefer Dunallan Castle a thousand times to that stupid town, which I never could suffer till towards the spring, when I was permitted to walk, or drive about to see the beautiful views in its neighbourhood.'

'You have indeed many sources of amusement and pleasure at this beautiful residence, Miss Dunallan; and I must compliment you on the taste you have displayed in laying out those picturesque grounds in the glen. I knew not until to-day, that the plan was entirely yours. When I was here formerly, nothing was to be seen there but woods—thick impenetrable woods.'

'Ah,' said Catharine, sighing, 'I was greatly occupied whilst my plan was carrying into execution. I believe I was never more happy; but when it was finished, I almost wished I could have restored the thick woods again. I wearied of its new form. I then amused myself by having that little Gothic building erected, which I endeavoured, by reading many books on architecture, and by procuring numberless plans, to make very perfect. I read every day for a month or two in that peaceful retreat, and I got suitable books, and Gothic furniture; but I soon tired more there than any where else; and though I had declared my



determination that *there* I should enjoy complete solitude, and must not on any account be disturbed, I soon longed for some intruder. I had my harp carried there also, but tired of the novelty of playing and singing alone. Now I scarcely ever go there but when I am in such low spirits as to hate company; and I prefer any other walk to the glen.' ~~X~~

'Are you so very inconstant, Miss Dunallan?' asked her cousin smiling.

Catharine blushed. She had talked on in her usual way, exactly saying what came into her head, and what was indeed the real truth; but this question, and the smile which accompanied it, recalled to her ideas how strongly this account of herself must confirm Dunallan in the opinion he had formed of her. She hesitated, then determining to affect nothing, she replied, 'I suppose I *am* very whimsical and inconstant, for none of the pursuits I have ever followed have afforded me half the pleasure I expected.'

'Because,' replied Dunallan, with much gentleness, 'you have been given a mind, my dear Miss Dunallan, which cannot be satisfied with the pursuits you have hitherto followed. What you have with so much ardour, made your first and favourite objects of pursuit (will you pardon me for saying it?), ought only to have been resorted to as recreations for a mind such as yours. You will not be surprised when I own to you that your character has been my particular study ever since I have been here. I have endeavoured to make myself acquainted with the nature of your pursuits. I have learned with what unwearied eagerness you followed them; and have now heard you confess your disappointment. I have seen your glen, your Gothic building, your garden, your green-house, your music room, your library, your paintings.'

'Oh! stop this enumeration,' exclaimed Catharine, 'I am sufficiently ashamed of my changeable unsatisfied feelings. But there are some things, Mr Dunallan, in which I have never changed. My father and Elizabeth are always the same to me. It is because I have had but few living objects of interest, that I have endeavoured to fix my affections on those which are incapable of satisfying the heart.'



‘When Elizabeth is with you, do you never feel any of this weariness and dissatisfaction?’ asked Dunallan mildly.

‘Not so much; and if I had several Elizabeths, I dare say I should never feel it.’

‘My dear Miss Dunallan,’ replied her cousin, ‘do not suppose that I presume to censure you, or any pursuit that has afforded you pleasure. I rather wished to express the admiration I felt, for the correct and beautiful taste which has led you, in comparative retirement, to arrive at a perfection in those pursuits which I have looked for in vain amongst those who have had opportunities of forming their ideas from the first models in the world.’

‘Flattery! even from you, Mr Dunallan! this I did not expect.’

‘I do not flatter, Miss Dunallan. I speak my real sentiments. All I have seen done by your direction, to improve the scenery around you, has, in my opinion, been charmingly done. Your Gothic reading retirement is in the most correct taste; your garden—all, indeed, appears to me in an uncommon degree perfect. Your paintings are so, from the just taste which has prevented your attempting what is beyond the power of almost any but artists to attain. Your music, from the same reason, is singularly pleasing. In short, you must not be displeased with me when I say, that I greatly admire both your natural powers, and the energy with which they have been cultivated. And allow me to add, that the more interest I feel in the possessor of these powers, the more anxious shall I be to see them directed to objects which will afford her a more pleasing reward than the weariness of which she complains, and which, though felt I believe by all who are engaged in trifling pursuits, becomes the supreme misery of a superior mind.’

There was something so earnest, yet kind and gentle in Dunallan’s voice and manner, that Catharine felt softened. ‘I long most earnestly,’ replied she, ‘to have such pursuits in my power.’

‘And may I ask,’ returned Dunallan, ‘were you completely your own mistress, what would be the first object of your wishes?’

‘Oh!’ said Catharine, ‘friends—friends whom I could love. I would search for them wherever I went; and I should go everywhere, and see everything that is worth seeing.’



‘And where would you first go in this search?’

‘To London perhaps.’

‘To London in search of friends!’ interrupted Dunallan, smiling.

‘I should expect to meet the most polished and agreeable society of my country there,’ replied Catharine, ‘and amongst them I surely might find some to love and many to admire; a sentiment I have scarcely ever experienced, and thought so very delightful when I did.’

‘Delightful indeed!’ replied Dunallan, ‘but after you had found friends, and objects of admiration?—’

‘I should in their society enjoy whatever offered: books, the theatre. We might travel in other countries, in search of those beauties and perfections not to be found in our own. Oh! I should never be unhappy anywhere surrounded by those I loved.’

They had now reached the summit of the hill to which Catharine proposed walking. After having slowly ascended by a path rendered almost dark by the deep woods which surrounded and overshadowed them, they at once, on turning a rocky point, came upon an opening in the road which discovered a scene of extreme grandeur and beauty. The hill on which they stood, steep, rocky, and covered with hanging woods, was washed at its base by the gently swelling waves of a far-extended inland bay, whilst all around rose woody hills and bold towering mountains, sometimes nearly meeting, and then receding, as if to disclose the beauteous lakes that lay within their sheltering grandeur, and now reflected in softened majesty the wild and varied beauties of their guardian mountains. Far beyond was seen a boundless ocean, peaceful and sublime, and here and there the faint but picturesque outline of some distant islands, half mingling with the clouds that glowed around the setting sun. All nature seemed hushed in silent pleasure. No sound was heard but the distant plash of oars from the little fishing boats that slowly glided homewards. The song of the blackbird, soft and wild, added sweetness and sadness to the feelings inspired by the universal calm, and sublime grandeur of the scene.

‘What a scene!’ exclaimed Dunallan. They both for some moments gazed in silent admiration.



‘I do not remember this magnificent view,’ resumed he. ‘How could I, even as a boy, be so dead to all that is great and beautiful in nature?’

‘It was not then known to be so fine,’ said Catharine. ‘It is so only from this side of the hill; and no one had thought of clearing away the wood, which was so close and thick as wholly to intercept the view.’

‘This, then, is another instance of your taste, Miss Dunallan,’ said her cousin.

She smiled.

‘And do you weary of this also?’ asked he.

‘Oh never. But this glorious scene inspires feelings almost as painful as weariness. One’s mind feels so bounded, so confined, so dark—amidst such splendid displays of nature.’

‘Of nature!’ repeated Dunallan. He paused and looked at Catharine. ‘What or who is nature?’ continued he. ‘Shall we, when we gaze on such a scene as this say, “The heavens declare the glory of *nature*—the earth is full of *her* glory?” Why, my dear Miss Dunallan, should we substitute a mere idea in the room of the glorious Being who has created that profusion of magnificence and beauty, and who formed in the human heart a capacity to feel so deeply what is magnificent and beautiful? Why, by ascribing this glory to a vague idea, separate ourselves still farther from its real and ever-present Author, who so powerfully solicits and demands our affections, and claims even the first place in our hearts? It is because love is the natural consequence of admiration, that we feel a sort of oppression on our feelings when we most intensely admire the glories around us, without raising our hearts to their Author. We cannot love inanimate nature in the degree we admire it. We cannot love an undefined idea; and we do not make ourselves acquainted with the character of the real Author, nor regard the light He pours around us in every part of his creation.’

Catharine felt awed by Dunallan’s manner: but after a pause replied, ‘Was nature always as we now see it, we should certainly wish to discard whatever might prevent us from attempting to ascend in thought to its divine Author: but I have seen that bay dark, and gloomy, and dangerous—the trees on its banks



rent by the storm—the boats tossing on the waves. I have been detained hours in this shelter, watching their perilous landing, whilst wives, and children, and mothers, were suffering anguish from their terrors: Then—’

‘Then,’ mildly interrupted Dunallan, ‘the lesson was only different, and taught what is equally necessary to be known,—that the Being who generally speaks to us in the language of love and mercy can also frown.’ The sound of approaching voices now interrupted this conversation.

‘I hear your friends advancing,’ said Dunallan, apparently rather disappointed by the interruption; ‘before we part may I ask, whether the life you described to me at the beginning of our walk was the life you would deem most happy?’

‘If I recollect aright what I said, it was,’ replied Catharine.

‘It was merely a life of pleasure and amusement,’ said Dunallan.

‘And would not that be happiness?’

‘No: and if you expect it to be so, be assured, dear Miss Dunallan, you will be disappointed.’

‘What life then would be happy?’

‘A life of usefulness alone.’

The party now approached, and seemed surprised at finding Catharine and Dunallan.

‘I thought you were with Lord Dunallan, my dear Catharine,’ said Rose; ‘Mr St Clair assured me that you were.’

‘And so I was, for a short time, dear Rose,’ replied Catharine.

St Clair seemed displeased and uncomfortable; young Cameron miserable. Catharine still leant on Dunallan’s arm; and taking a last look of the bay, and its surrounding mountains, now darkening in the twilight, they turned to descend the hill. The path admitted of two only. Catharine and Dunallan walked on in silence. Her thoughts were fixed on his last words, ‘a life of usefulness;’ she wished to know his ideas of such a life. The conversation of this evening had increased her esteem for Dunallan, yet she felt even less able than before to understand him. She wished, however, that she could, and determined that, in future, she would not avoid his society. As they were entering the house, she said to him, smiling,



‘Mr Dunallan, you must tell me what you think is a useful life at some other time.’

‘I shall be most happy to tell you,’ replied he, ‘and if you would agree with me—if in this we could be of the same opinion;’ he hesitated—then stopped, and left the sentence unfinished.

St Clair was near, and heard what passed. They then joined the party in the drawing-room. St Clair almost immediately addressed Dunallan in his usual slighting tone of voice and manner.

‘Pray, Mr Dunallan, are you one of those people who approve of young ladies teaching poor children to read the Bible, etc. etc., instead of sending them, in the good old way, to be taught by some old woman in the village!’

‘I think,’ replied Dunallan, with unmoved calmness, ‘that where there is an old woman, capable of teaching, it would be a pity to supersede her in her profession; but I think young ladies most properly and most amiably employed in superintending and encouraging the old woman in her labours.’

‘Well,’ resumed St Clair, ‘I confess I have not been able to perceive the benefit poor children can receive from the instructions of young ladies, that they might not equally receive from that of old women; and I mean, when I get a seat in Parliament, to offer my services to the old ladies, to bring in a bill to guard the profession against those pretty intruders; and that for their sakes, as much as that of the old ladies; for I know nothing so likely to injure the charms of the lovelier sex as the air and manner of a school-mistress.’

All the young ladies laughed excepting Rose.

‘I beg, Mr St Clair,’ said Mrs Lennox, ‘that you will have the goodness to let that subject remain at rest. Teaching the poor is the fashion of the day, and my poor Rose has been infected by it: but she has an inaptitude about her at doing any thing, even a fashionable thing, fashionably. Instead of subscribing, as I do, to Lady Mary D.’s school in our neighbourhood, and always going to its examinations, and presenting the children with new dresses—for they have such a neat uniform—instead of this, my poor Rose must have a dozen little miserable things, who are too sickly to walk so far as the school, in her room,



and teach them to read the Bible, during those very hours I wished her to devote to her harp.'

Rose blushed, and tears started into her eyes.

'You know, mamma, I wish to rise two hours earlier for my harp.'

'Oh, yes, my dear, and look like a ghost from want of sleep! Ridiculous!'

'Surely,' said George Lennox, 'ten hours of sleep is too much, either for health, or in a moral point of view.'

'Dear George,' said Mrs Lennox, 'do not encourage your sister. She will think I was quite cruel in preventing her spending the precious hours necessary to acquire those accomplishments, which are quite indispensable, in teaching a few miserable cottagers, what, if they are to live, they will learn equally well in the next village.'

'Which is four miles off,' said George, 'and the school not large enough to admit nearly all the children who have strength to walk: consequently, half the girls around us have scarcely any means of instruction.'

'I did not know you were so intimately acquainted with their affairs, George,' said his mother, trying to smile.

'I am perfectly acquainted with their situation,' replied George, 'and long most earnestly to see it improved.'

'Well, I declare,' exclaimed Sir Archibald Cameron, addressing Lord Dunallan, 'I think there is something very amiable in the enthusiasm for improving the state of the poor, which is so general at present amongst well-disposed young people.'

'Very amiable indeed,' replied his Lordship, with an air of absence.

'Certainly,' said Mrs St Clair, 'improve the lower orders as much as possible by proper means; but not by young ladies forgetting their places in society, and doing that themselves which ought to be left to more proper persons, while they neglect —'

'Their harps,' interrupted Dunallan playfully.

'Oh, I forgot, Mr Dunallan, that you were an advocate for ladies' schools.'

Dunallan attempted to change the subject, which seemed



disagreeable or uninteresting to most of the party ; but St Clair appeared determined to pursue it, and appealed to Catharine for her opinion.

‘I have not formed any,’ replied she languidly ; her thoughts had indeed wandered from a subject in which she felt little interest.

St Clair looked disappointed at the careless indifference of her manner ; she perceived this, and said smiling, ‘I can tell you, however, what my opinion is, without taking time to consider what it ought to be. I believe it is proper to have the poor children taught all that may afterwards be useful to them ; but I think it would be very tiresome to do it myself ; and I suspect that the young ladies who do it have, in general (perhaps almost unconsciously), some secret view to praise, or, in short, something more agreeable than the mere pleasure of imparting knowledge to the ignorant.’

St Clair laughed. ‘Ah ! Miss Dunallan,’ exclaimed he, ‘your penetration leads you to the truth direct, without a tedious attempt to form a wise opinion.’

‘The discovery of such truths, however,’ said Dunallan, in a tone of voice almost severe, ‘does more honour to the penetration of the head than to the feelings of the heart.’

Catharine reddened, and bowing to Dunallan said, ‘It is perhaps fortunate for me, Mr Dunallan, that of late I have found it necessary to avoid consulting the heart ; I might otherwise have felt your compliment too deeply.’ She then rose, and went towards her harp, to conceal the tears she could not restrain.

St Clair glanced indignantly at Dunallan, and then followed her ; an expression of pleasure, however, was also on his countenance. Dunallan became very thoughtful, and the ladies looked at each other.

‘You see the consequences of your foolish schools, Rose,’ said Mrs Lennox in a whisper to her daughter ; ‘you have made your young friend quite unhappy.’

Rose seemed to believe herself the cause of what had passed ; and going towards Dunallan said, in a low voice, ‘I believe Catharine is quite right ; I did hope I should be doing something worthy of praise in teaching those poor children.’



Dunallan smiled, 'But that was not your motive for doing it, Miss Lennox.'

'Oh, perhaps it might; at any rate, it does not signify how it was. Don't you like the harp? Let us go near.'

Dunallan followed the sweet girl. St Clair was attempting to recommend himself to Catharine by the most flattering description of a scene he had witnessed that day—a family who, from great wretchedness, had been placed in a situation of comfort by Catharine's bounty. Dunallan listened eagerly. St Clair used all his eloquence to reconcile her to herself. Rose joined in admiration of her friend's goodness; young Cameron also was more eloquent than usual in the eulogium he bestowed on this idol of his heart. All seemed anxious to make up to her for the cruel speech of Dunallan; but in vain; a cloud was fixed on Catharine's brow which nothing could remove during the whole of the evening. She tired of the harp, and entreating Rose to take her place, and putting her arm within Elizabeth's, she passed Dunallan with an air of extreme coldness, and led her friend to another part of the room, showing by her looks that she did not wish to be followed. Elizabeth, when she saw that the gentlemen were attempting to converse with the party of young ladies they had left, said in a low voice, 'I feel that you have some cause to be displeased, dear Catharine, but do not, my friend, show your feelings so much; try at least to conceal them for a short time.'

'I cannot,' replied Catharine, 'I never felt more miserable.'

'You do not feel more so than he does,' said Elizabeth, glancing towards Dunallan, who stood in deep thought near Rose's harp.

Catharine followed Elizabeth's look, and then sighed deeply. 'His misery is no comfort to me. He must be miserable, thinking of me as he does. Oh! what wretchedness is before us both!'

During the remainder of the evening, Catharine purposely avoided meeting Dunallan's looks. When parting for the night, he held out his hand as usual; she gave him hers; he held it for a moment, and she involuntarily looked up. Dunallan's manner seemed to ask forgiveness, but Catharine turned coldly



away. He pressed her hand gently in his, saying, 'Good night,' in a voice more than usually soft. Catharine felt she had cause to be displeased, yet was touched by his manner. Elizabeth, on this occasion, did not defend Dunallan, for she too had thought him harsh. When they again met, Catharine's manner was distant and somewhat haughty. Elizabeth's was also colder. Dunallan seemed painfully sensible of the change. He endeavoured at different times to induce Catharine to enter into conversation with him, but she purposely avoided it; and once that he found her alone, she turned so markedly from him, that, though he still appeared anxious, by every other means, to regain her approbation, he no longer attempted to resume that intercourse which had, in some degree, subsisted between them before that unfortunate evening. He looked unhappy, however, and Catharine now felt her power. This almost unconsciously gave her pleasure, which she still more unconsciously betrayed in her manner; and it was Dunallan himself who led her to perceive this; she felt that he read her very soul, and was soon convinced, by the indifference of his manner, that if her displeasure had given him pain, her feeling satisfaction in that pain had not only done it away, but had also lowered her in his opinion.

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

ONE evening Lord Dunallan sent for his daughter. On her entering the apartment in which he waited for her, he met her, and with even more than his usual tenderness, pressed her to his heart.

'My dear Catharine, my beloved child, my long-dreaded trial is at last come; I must *at last* part with the idol of my affections.'

Catharine became as pale as death at this sudden intimation of her approaching fate. For some moments she could not speak; then struggling for composure,

'Is Mr Dunallan still desirous to—,' her voice trembling, and she stopt.



Her father hesitated, 'My love, what is your opinion of Mr Dunallan? You now know him. Tell me candidly, my Catharine, your sentiments respecting him.'

'And will my opinion, will my sentiments have any influence over the future?' asked Catharine eagerly.

Lord Dunallan looked uneasy: 'If, my love, I could make any change——if you could not feel——but it is impossible. Yet I should wish——could you only love him, Catharine, Oh! how happy should I be, happier than I can express.'

'Be happy then, my dear father,' replied Catharine, attempting to smile; but the tears gushed into her eyes, and she turned away to conceal them.

Her father remained silent for some moments, then sighing deeply said, 'Mr Dunallan I think, my Catharine, ought to please. He is mild, and sensible, and polite in his manners; he is handsome; his conversation does not seem uninteresting to you; he is singularly well informed. In short, what do you find disagreeable in Mr Dunallan?'

'I do not find any thing *disagreeable*,' said Catharine; 'but——'

'Do you not, my love?' interrupted Lord Dunallan joyfully. 'How you delight me! Well, I will ask no more.'

Catharine smiled languidly; she felt hurt, and made no reply.

Her father understood the expression of her countenance, and paused a moment, then proceeded. 'I have just had a conversation with Mr Dunallan. He tells me that he has received letters which oblige him to be in London in a month; he will be detained there some time, and may perhaps go abroad. In short, my love, he wishes to hasten your union, that you may, I suppose, spend a short time at Arnmore before you leave Scotland; for there also he has business of importance, which has met with much delay from his residence here for so many weeks.'

Catharine reddened. 'And his convenience makes it necessary, I suppose, to hurry over the business which brought him here; and you, my Lord, expect me to agree to——'

'My love, you do Mr Dunallan great injustice; he has in no instance forgot the respect and delicacy due to you: his first wish seems to be your happiness.'

'My happiness!' repeated Catharine, 'ah, let him leave me



with you, then, my dear father—at least till he has arranged all these affairs.’

‘He proposed this, my child, but I declined it.’

‘Declined it!’ exclaimed Catharine; ‘impossible! Oh, my dear father, could you so far forget all that is due to your daughter! to my sex!’

She rose and stood, with breathless and terrified expectation, awaiting his answer.

He in a soothing manner took both her hands: ‘Be calm, my Catharine, your father has forgotten nothing which your delicacy ought to require; nothing which he can suppose essential to your future happiness. Mr Dunallan, I am certain, loves you, Catharine.’

She turned away.

‘You do not think he does, my love; but from his whole manner, and the anxious solicitude he showed respecting your wishes, feelings, and future happiness, I feel convinced you would now be the choice of his heart, were he freed from all engagements.’

‘And as a proof of this,’ said Catharine with bitterness, ‘he asks delay. Oh, my dear father, pity me! do not urge this! do not thus mortify——’

‘My love, you must allow me to trust my own judgment in this matter. You entirely mistake Mr Dunallan. He only proposes delay with a view to what might be your wish. Recollect yourself, my child, and let me hope, my ever kind, ever considerate Catharine, that you will still be willing to fulfil past and indissoluble engagements.’

‘And when? my Lord,’ replied Catharine with assumed firmness.

‘My Catharine, I have promised to Mr Dunallan, to gain your consent to be his, on Tuesday next.’

‘On Tuesday next! within a week!’ she became quite pale, but added, in a voice of forced calmness, ‘My Lord, I shall be ready.’

He held out his hand, she gave him hers, but turned away her face. ‘Dearest Catharine, you will be happy.’ She made no reply, but hastening from him, shut herself into her own



apartment, and gave vent to her miserable and mortified feelings. She was unable to appear at dinner, her head ached so violently. Elizabeth, in vain, tried to offer some consolation. Her wounded pride and affection had prevented her gaining any particulars from her father of the manner in which he had declined Dunallan's proposed delay: yet the idea that he had hastened their union against Dunallan's wishes, rendered her wretched. She could not regain sufficient composure to appear that evening. Her father, however, visited her in her room; and his affectionate kindness, and the anxiety and deep concern expressed in his countenance, revived in her heart a willingness to sacrifice her own feelings to his favourite wishes.

She next morning appeared at breakfast, but looked so ill, that every one annoyed her by their condolence, and inquiries respecting her health. To Dunallan she never raised her eyes. If she had, she would have seen that he looked as miserable as herself. Elizabeth told her so afterwards.

'My dear Elizabeth,' replied she, 'do not speak to me of him, or of anything that is not a thousand miles from the subject, or I shall never be able to support myself till next Tuesday. I will, if possible, make my father happy. After that, happen what will, I shall be at a distance from him. He will not know what I suffer.'

Elizabeth tenderly watched over her unhappy friend, attempting to soothe her agitated feelings, and to convince her that the power to meet approaching trials, is not to be gained by turning the mind from them; but, on the contrary, by viewing them, as far as may be, in their true colours, divested of all imaginary aggravations, and thus preparing for the patient endurance of what is unavoidable.

'Do not follow me, my Elizabeth,' said Catharine, the evening after her conversation with her father, 'I am going to the Glen; I shall not there be interrupted; and I wish to accustom myself to view the future without your kind looks and dear voice always ready to win me from painful thought.'

Elizabeth believed her right, and suffered her to go alone.

After Catharine had walked some time in deep thought, she was suddenly startled by the sound of approaching footsteps. It



is Dunallan! thought she; even this retreat is no longer safe from his privileged intrusion. She would have turned away, but felt ashamed of her weakness; and raising her head from its drooping and thoughtful posture, determined not to be intruded on even by Dunallan. It was young Cameron; and Catharine felt so relieved when she saw it was not her dreaded cousin, that an expression of pleasure, which Cameron had seldom the happiness to inspire, was visible on her countenance.

‘Pardon this intrusion, Miss Dunallan,’ said he; ‘I thought you were engaged, or I should not have presumed——’

‘Oh! I beg, Mr Cameron, you will walk wherever you feel inclined,’ interrupted Catharine. ‘There are many paths here for solitary people; but I must at present leave you.’ She was passing on, when the beseeching expression of his looks stopt her. ‘Do you wish to read in my retreat, Mr Cameron? You will find some new books, and I am not going there.’

‘No, Miss Dunallan, I wish a moment’s conversation with you.’

‘Certainly,’ said Catharine, turning to walk with him.

He seemed at a loss and unable to speak. Catharine looked at him, and his confusion leading her to suspect the truth, she felt sorry that she had consented to listen to him, yet wished as soon as possible to put an end to his suspense. She walked on in silence. At length, after many attempts, he regained sufficient composure to say, in a hurried voice, ‘Miss Dunallan, it is impossible for any one so deeply interested in your happiness as I am, not to feel miserable in seeing the present state of your feelings, or to help almost execrating the unnatural——’

‘Mr Cameron,’ interrupted Catharine, ‘I cannot stay to hear any thing of this nature.’

She was turning away, when he respectfully, yet almost wildly, seized her hand.

‘Forgive me; I know not what I say. Oh! Catharine, if you knew what I have suffered—what I do suffer—but I know you cannot feel for me——’

‘I do feel for you, Mr Cameron,’ interrupted Catharine; ‘and, as a proof of it, I entreat you never to think of me more, but as a friend who grieves to think she has ever pained you. It is



impossible you can regain the happiness I wish you, thinking otherwise. Next Tuesday I am to be the wife of Mr Dunallan.'

'I know it, Catharine; but without loving him. You, the idol of so many hearts! you whom I would die to preserve from the least uneasiness, are to —— Oh! I cannot endure the thought. Hear me, Catharine! I have formed a plan to avoid this cruel sacrifice—my mother has consented; I ask no reward—I hope for nothing.'

'Mr Cameron,' interrupted Catharine, 'you must say no more. I thank you for the interest you feel in my fate; but you quite mistake my character, if you think I could thus consent to withdraw from an engagement formed by my father. Farewell! and for your sake, let me say, for a long time.'

Catharine spoke with a firm calmness, that left Cameron no hope of inducing her to change her sentiments. He pressed her hand to his heart: 'Farewell, then, Catharine, for ever,—my first, my only love, my last!' He rushed from her. She looked after him, till the trees concealed him from her sight, then burst into tears. 'What a world is this!' thought she; 'how unhappy the human race. In this remote corner, a few are met together; and even here, where all promises peace, the half of them are miserable!'

She walked slowly towards the house, fearing again to meet young Cameron.

The party were assembled in a room which opened on the lawn. She heard voices, and approached. As she drew near, she distinguished Dunallan's voice, and Elizabeth's. They seemed gay and cheerful. 'Is it possible!' thought she; 'Elizabeth told me he looked miserable,—and she too so gay! How foolish to suppose myself of so much consequence to others. I will not cloud their gaiety by my melancholy presence; yet I could not have thus laughed had Elizabeth been so wretched.' Dunallan's voice continued as if reading, and pausing at intervals, whilst the others laughed and talked. Catharine turned away to go to her own apartment. As she passed, she perceived St Clair seated in a window, in a melancholy and thoughtful attitude, and apparently unoccupied with what was passing. He started on seeing her, and rose; she bowed and passed on.



In a few minutes Elizabeth joined her. 'You promised to come to us, my dear Catharine, when you returned.'

'I mean to keep my promise,' replied Catharine, 'but I am tired; leave me to rest a little here. Do not let me, Elizabeth, interrupt your amusements.'

'Amusements, Catharine! what do you mean?'

'Oh, nothing. But come now, I am ready to go with you.'

She hastened away from Elizabeth, and joined the party below, who had now become perfectly quiet. St Clair still sat at the window. He rose on her entrance. She seated herself near the window. 'You are admiring the evening, Mr St Clair; it is indeed beautiful.'

St Clair sat down by her. 'Beautiful, indeed,' replied he, 'but very sad. Those grey clouds, tinged with the last rays of the sun, becoming fainter every moment, always remind me of something melancholy.'

'I feel the same,' said Catharine: 'the setting sun always reminds me of death,—that last setting,—that departure to other climes.'

'Let us go into the next room, or have lights here,' said Lord Dunallan.

'Oh, my dear father, allow us to enjoy this peaceful twilight,' said Catharine, in an entreating tone of voice.

'Surely, my love, if you wish it.' He approached and stood near her; 'but we must leave such gloomy subjects, Mr St Clair. Where is that strange poem you were reading, Mr Dunallan? Perhaps there still may be sufficient light to read it to Catharine.'

Dunallan found the poem, and bringing it to the window, began to read. All laughed a second time. Catharine could hardly smile; she was not in a humour to laugh at any thing, and wondered that any one could. St Clair smiled contemptuously, and she better understood his feelings. Dunallan had not spoken since she entered the room, and she never looked at him until he was reading this poem; indeed she had avoided looking at him for many days, and was now struck with the languor and paleness of his countenance, as well as with the little real cheerfulness he seemed to feel while he laughed with



the others. When he stopped reading, he turned his eyes towards Catharine. Hers were fixed on him, and she withdrew them without that expression of displeasure which, ever since her conversation with her father, had filled them when she was in any way called upon to notice Dunallan. He ventured to approach her, and said, in a voice of extreme gentleness, 'you seem fatigued, Miss Dunallan; I fear you have walked too far.'

'Yes,' answered Catharine, 'I believe I have;' she almost unconsciously added, looking at Dunallan with an expression of concern, 'are *you* quite well, Mr Dunallan?'

'Perfectly so,' replied he, a slight flush tinging his forehead. He looked down for a moment, but his eyes still retained an expression of pleasure when he again raised them.

The conversation now became more general. When the sun was set, and it was become too dark to see the expression of any one's countenance, young Cameron glided into the room, and seated himself at a distance from Catharine. He sometimes joined in the conversation, and no one would have suspected him of being more unhappy than usual.

When Catharine retired to her room for the night, she found a letter on her table. She opened it, exclaiming, 'A letter from St Clair!' Elizabeth was with her. 'What can he have to say to you, Catharine?'

'A strange proposal,' said Catharine, after reading it. 'How little does he know me!' She threw his letter indignantly from her.

Elizabeth took it up. 'May I read it, Catharine?'

'I believe I ought not to betray his secret; but you, Elizabeth, may know it. He is so vain, so conceited, I can never wish him to stand high in your opinion.'

Elizabeth read the letter. 'Poor St Clair,' said she, 'he flatters himself he is not indifferent to you.'

'If he had not been so before,' replied Catharine, 'this would have made him so. An elopement! Had he known my character as he pretends in this letter to do, he would have been convinced that I would sooner endure any misery than escape from it by such means. I would sooner die than degrade myself even for those I could love.' —



‘Proud Catharine,’ said Elizabeth, smiling, ‘you know not what love is.’

‘I certainly do not know, Elizabeth, nor can I even conceive what that sort of love is which could induce me to take such a degrading step as this. I cannot imagine myself so deluded as to suppose I could be happy after I had rendered myself the object of my own contempt. But give me this letter. It does not pain me to disappoint this vain St Clair. I wish he was gone, and his mother also, whose haughty spirit begins, I see, to revolt at the little effect her flattery and caresses have on me. I loathe all this, Elizabeth. I almost think Arnmore and Mr Dunallan’s contemptuous treatment will be less intolerable than those incessant women, Mrs Lennox and Mrs St Clair, with their gross flattery, and teasing disgusting attentions.’

‘Dear Catharine, you are very severe.’

‘No, Elizabeth, I am not unjustly so. Don’t I see through all this? Is not Rose as amiable—far more amiable than I am? Are not you, Elizabeth, more——’

‘No, no, no, dear Catharine; but good night; you will leave yourself no time for sleep, and that pale face sadly calls for it.’

‘Do not mind my face, Elizabeth; it must be paler yet. You must see my reply to this letter; I feel so indignant, I fear I shall be unbecomingly so in what I write.’

Next morning, neither St Clair nor young Cameron appeared at breakfast. Lady Cameron said her son had been unexpectedly called away, and that she and her family must also deny themselves the pleasure of a further stay at Dunallan Castle, as business made it necessary that Sir Archibald should return home. Lord Dunallan seemed disappointed, and entreated them to prolong their stay to the following week. Catharine was silent. Lady Cameron, however, was gently determined in her resolution, though she looked concerned, and her daughters very grave. Lord Dunallan perceived that something had happened, and guessed from Catharine’s looks that she was the cause of this sudden determination. Mrs St Clair’s colour this morning was higher than usual, but she attempted to conceal her disappointed pride and hopes under an air of contempt. ‘I too must unfortunately relinquish the pleasure of being



present during the next *happy* week, my Lord,' said she, after Lady Cameron had announced her intended departure; 'but it is easy to part from friends when we leave them so secure of felicity.' Catharine felt this speech as it was intended, but remained silent. Both families left Dunallan Castle during the forenoon; but Lord Dunallan was relieved from his dread of a very small party by the arrival of young Clanmar and his amiable wife.

'I must really endeavour, my dear Elizabeth,' said Catharine to her friend, 'to conceal, for these few remaining days, the misery I endure. I feel mortified and degraded by what has already passed, in consequence of my giving way to my wretched feelings. I must not—shall not be an object of compassion to every one, and of distress to my father. Do not look so much and so anxiously at me when I am in company, Elizabeth, and try to speak cheerfully to me. Oh that conversation between my father and Dunallan! could I only forget that. But to be forced upon him; he to ask delay!' She clasped her hands in anguish of mind.

'I have entreated your father, dearest Catharine, to tell me what passed on that occasion, and I do not think you have any reason to suppose Mr Dunallan wished for delay on any account, but your apparent indifference to him.'

'Did my father tell you what passed? Do not, for heaven's sake, conceal it from me, Elizabeth: truth cannot be worse than my fears.'

'Lord Dunallan told me that the only idea which seemed to distress Dunallan, was your marked indifference, he even thought dislike to him, which led him to fear your being led by motives of obedience to your father, to take vows which your heart could not ratify. In short, my dear Catharine, some religious scruples which he felt for *you* only: and this convinced me that the state of his own feelings enables him to take them without scruple: for with his strict notions he would not have considered himself innocent in so doing, had he felt otherwise.'

'And would he have been innocent, Elizabeth? or, shall I be innocent?'

'Ah! Catharine, you must not now think of this. It is too late: besides, you fulfil a first duty in obeying your father.'



Catharine was not convinced, but felt that it was, as Elizabeth said, too late to plead such an excuse. Yet, like her friend, she could not help concluding that Dunallan would not be willing, probably, to take these solemn vows, were he averse to fulfilling them. Yet he had asked delay. She determined, if possible, to avoid thinking, and to attempt to appear less unhappy, let Dunallan suppose what he would. She wished to leave her father under the impression that she was reconciled to his wishes. For the few following days her countenance wore an expression of submission, and calm elevation of mind, inspired by the consciousness of sacrificing her own feelings to those of her father; while the paleness of her looks, and her touching gentleness to all around her, gave her the appearance of one who had lost all hope for herself, and only sought to bestow on others what was for her gone for ever. When addressing her father, she even attempted to be cheerful. To Dunallan she was respectful and attentive, as if she already had taken the vow of subjection. Yet she deceived no one. When she met Dunallan's eyes, which she carefully avoided, but which seemed for ever fixed on her, she saw in them an expression of pity and concern she could not mistake. Her father, too, in vain tried to affect a gaiety, which only served to render his next moments of absence, and evidently painful thought, more striking.

---

## CHAPTER V.

At last the dreaded morning arrived. Elizabeth went to her friend at an early hour: she found her dressed, and seated at a table, which was covered with letters and papers.

‘What is all this, my Catharine? Remember, my dear friend, the fatigues of this day.’

‘I do remember, my Elizabeth. I am only performing a necessary duty. It ought not to have been so long neglected; but never till last night did it so forcibly strike me that I might not again see Dunallan Castle: I had quite forgotten to settle some things. But I have done,’ added she, putting up her



papers with a composure that astonished Elizabeth; then turning to her friend, a faint smile on her languid countenance,

‘How do you like my bridal attire, Elizabeth?’

Elizabeth looked at her for a moment, then turned away to conceal her tears.

‘Dear Catharine, do not look so patient, so resigned, yet so unhappy. You will leave us all quite miserable.’

‘I look as I feel, Elizabeth. I am resigned. I have now arranged all I wish to be done should I never again return here, and I care not what happens. I am prepared for every thing, but (her voice changed) parting from you: (then feeling herself overcome), I must not think of this—we shall soon again meet. I shall write,—No, dear Elizabeth, do not embrace me; do nothing to soften me. I have almost wished these few days for Mrs St Clair, instead of that gentle Mrs Clanmar, who looks so sweetly anxious to comfort me, and to gain my confidence: and my dear kind Rose, and even you, Elizabeth. I entreat you do not all gaze on me with looks of such touching interest. Even Mr Dunallan; but I must not think of him: had he felt pity for me sooner; but it is now too late. O that the next hour were over! When will it be time for breakfast? You know we were to set off very early. When I am gone, Elizabeth, will you assure my father——’ Her voice failed, and she turned away, and walked to an open window. The morning was calm and beautiful, and the freshness of the air revived her. She sat down, but rose again almost immediately, a blush crimsoning her before pale cheek.

‘Mr Dunallan,’ said she, retiring hastily from the window, ‘returning as usual from his morning walk, I suppose, quite composed; and he has seen that I am ready,’ added she bitterly and looking at her dress. ‘He bowed, too, to show he did, perhaps. Well, a short time will undeceive him now. I shall soon have no secrets from him: no attempts to conceal my real feelings: he shall know that I have a heart that can be given only by myself; and calm, and proud, and immoveably right as he always is, he shall not despise me.’

‘Despise you, Catharine! he does not, he never did. I am satisfied he, I could almost say, loves you.’



A gentle tap at the door of the apartment interrupted Elizabeth. Catharine became quite pale. It was Lord Dunallan.

‘My Catharine, my dear love, we wait for you.’

Catharine attempted to regain her composure, but without success. She leant on her father, but stopped on the stairs to breathe; her heart beat so violently that she became quite faint.

‘My dear uncle,’ said Elizabeth, ‘let Catharine and me remain together till after breakfast. It is too much for her to see all our assembled friends before this trying ceremony.’ Lord Dunallan agreed to this proposal; and Catharine returned to her room with Elizabeth, who endeavoured to induce her to take some refreshment. She tried, but in vain. She was sick at heart.

‘I cannot go through this ceremony, Elizabeth.’

‘Dear Catharine, recollect yourself. It is not possible now to retract.’

‘Leave me, dear Elizabeth. I regain composure most easily when alone. Take this last kiss, my Elizabeth; after I am again calm, do not bestow one kind word or look upon me, or I shall be unable for this dreadful exhibition—these fearful, untrue vows!’

Elizabeth would not consent to leave her friend. She saw that the kind of composure she acquired when left alone, was only the result of an attempt to feel indifferent to every thing, and that the first trifle which awakened her feelings destroyed her composure. Elizabeth partly succeeded in calming her agitation, by representing things as they really were.

‘I am ready, my dear Elizabeth,’ said Catharine at last, ‘my true, my best friend!’

Lord Dunallan entered, and Catharine became as pale as ever. She took his arm, however, and hastened forward, as if afraid of again being obliged to return.

Lord Dunallan opened the door of the apartment in which the party were assembled. Catharine shrunk back for a moment, then suffered her father to lead her forward. In an instant Dunallan was at her side, and the voice of the old and venerable clergyman of Dunallan church was raised to heaven in prayer. Catharine, pale as marble, and almost as still, leant



on her father, and seemed to listen, but did not hear. Dunallan audibly assented to the few simple but solemn vows he was required to make. Catharine's assent was supposed. Elizabeth drew her white glove from a hand almost as white and lifeless. Dunallan took it in his, and she was restored to some degree of consciousness by feeling that his trembled. He held her hand firmly, however, till the short ceremony was over, then, touching it with his lips, resigned it to her father.

Lord Dunallan would have pressed Catharine to his heart, but she hurried from him, and from every one. Elizabeth followed her, but she waved her hand for her to leave her. Her father appeared! 'Your journey is long, my love; my Catharine, I must hurry you from me. Mr Dunallan is anxious——'

Catharine started up:—'I am ready.'

'God for ever bless my dearest child.'

'O my dearest father!'

He pressed her for an instant to his heart, then led her away. Dunallan was waiting. The hall was full of servants, anxious to have a last look of their beloved young mistress.

Catharine shrunk back.

'I shall say adieu for you,' exclaimed Elizabeth; 'Adieu, adieu, every one,' cried she, with forced gaiety, while Lord Dunallan supported Catharine into the carriage.

Dunallan followed; and Catharine's heart sunk within her, when its door was closed on her and this most dreaded, but now nearest of all human relations. She threw herself back, and almost fainted.

Dunallan would have stopped the carriage, but Catharine motioned with her hand to prevent him. She dreaded her father seeing her agitation.

Dunallan watched her changing countenance with the deepest concern. Catharine felt annoyed, conscious that his looks were bent on her, though she did not raise her eyes, and struggled to regain composure. She attempted to let down the glass next to her; Dunallan leant past to assist, but his hand trembled almost as much as her own, and she was struck with surprise at the expression of distress and agitation which his countenance now betrayed: she even thought his eyes glistened as he turned his



face from her. The calm grave expression with which her imagination always pictured him was now wholly gone. She forgot her own feelings in thinking of his; and continuing in deep and painful thought for a few moments, the tumult within in part subsided. How selfish have I been, thought she, I forgot that he could feel, and that he has equal, perhaps greater, cause of distress than myself.

‘The air, I hope, revives you?’ asked Dunallan, in a mild and soothing tone of voice.

She attempted to reply, but burst into tears; and, long repressed, they now flowed beyond all power of restraint. She covered her face, and turning away from Dunallan, wept and sobbed aloud. Dunallan did not speak, but she heard him sigh frequently and deeply. He at last, in the gentlest tone of voice, entreated her to be composed.

‘Endeavour, Catharine, to forget the last few hours: only remember that you have now another friend, who has vowed in the sight of heaven to watch over your happiness. You shall yourself determine in what that happiness shall consist. I have seen too plainly your repugnance to the interested connection which your generous sense of duty has induced you to form. I have tried every means in my power, Catharine, to set you free, but all have failed; and I have been most reluctantly forced to tear you from your home, and deprive you of the power of choosing your nearest friend and protector. All that I can at this moment hope is, that it may be in my power to render you at least not unhappy.’

Catharine became gradually calm as Dunallan spoke. His voice and manner were so soothingly earnest and kind, that she felt touched.

‘Let us, Catharine,’ continued he, ‘now attempt to look at things as they really are. There is no peace or calm to the mind but in truth.’

‘Truth!’ repeated Catharine in a tone of voice, and with an expression of the most mournful despondency.

‘Yes, dear Catharine, truth even at this moment; and first, can you not feel me worthy of forgiveness in persevering in the fulfilment of the same promise to a dead father, that with every



feeling of dislike and repugnance on your part, you have yet considered it a sacred duty to fulfil to a living one?' Catharine was struck; this simple question of Dunallan's seemed indeed to bring a volume of truth into her mind; but her thoughts were confused, and she remained silent. Dunallan, however, seemed to wait for her reply.

'Mr Dunallan,' said she at last, sick at heart while she spoke, 'I cannot feel that truth brings to me either calmness or peace. I would rather attempt to forget everything, but that I have, to please my father, entered a situation in which it becomes my duty to try to be satisfied with your conduct on all occasions. I wish to fulfil this duty; if I fail, you will perhaps feel indulgence for me when you recollect——'

Catharine's voice failed, and she could say no more.

Dunallan turned away, and Catharine looked up, half conscious that she had answered his true and simple appeal with an ungenerous evasion. She was surprised and overcome on seeing that the cold, dreaded Dunallan, was moved even to tears.

'Catharine!' exclaimed he, after making several efforts to speak with composure, 'How shall I—how can I convince you that I am not the unfeeling, selfish, interested, cruel being, I see you suppose me? You have scarcely ever permitted me to speak to you. Of late you have not even deigned to look at me. You have defeated every attempt on my part to explain myself—to attempt to assist you to be free. You have taken no notice of my letters; your father has been equally—shall I say, *unjust*, to me.'

'Letters! Mr Dunallan,' interrupted Catharine; 'I received no letters from you.'

Dunallan looked surprised. 'I thrice wrote to you, Catharine, when you denied me every means of imparting to you what I thought might perhaps have put it in your power to avoid a connection which I saw was so hateful to you.'

'I never received any letter from you, Mr Dunallan,' repeated Catharine solemnly.

'Extraordinary!' exclaimed Dunallan; 'I sent for your own woman, Catharine; her name, I think, is Martin, and myself gave all my letters into her hand.'



Catharine now, on her part, looked much surprised. 'You gave your letters to Martin! Mr Dunallan.'

'I did: all of them.'

Catharine became very thoughtful. Could any one—could St Clair have intercepted Dunallan's letters? Impossible! She could not for a moment suspect Martin, to whom they had been entrusted, of the smallest unfaithfulness. 'Most extraordinary!' said she thoughtfully.

'Is Martin among your present attendants, Catharine?' asked Dunallan.

'She is.'

'May I then ask an explanation from her?'

'Certainly.'

Dunallan stopped the carriage, and desired a servant to request Martin, who was in another just behind, to come for a moment to the window. She soon appeared, and the other servants retired. Martin looked alarmed. She stood at the side of the carriage at which Catharine sat.

'Do not be alarmed,' said Dunallan gently, and leaning past Catharine a little to speak to her: 'Do you recollect, Martin, my giving you three letters at different times to deliver to your lady?'

'I do, Sir, perfectly. It was only last night you gave me one, and two before that, about, I think——'

'And what became of those letters, Martin?' asked Catharine, interrupting her, and now leaning forward with looks of surprise and displeasure.

Martin appeared astonished at the question.

'Speak the truth, Martin,' said Catharine, her eyes filling with tears as she added, 'Can *you*, Martin, be unfaithful to me?'

'My dear, dear young lady, no; not for all the world could offer,' exclaimed Martin, tears gushing into her eyes as she spoke; 'I thought I was only giving the letters to Lord Dunallan, as he commanded me, that he might himself deliver them to you.'

Catharine sunk back: 'You gave the letters to my father,' said she faintly.

'Yes, Madam: just the very day on which Mr Dunallan



trusted me with his first letter, my Lord had commanded me to bring any letter for my young lady to him, and he would himself take charge of it.'

Dunallan looked for a moment at Catharine; her eyes were raised timidly to him.

'That is enough,' said he in the gentlest tone of voice, to poor Martin, who stood in apparent consternation. 'You have done nothing wrong, Martin; we may now proceed.' He waited till she had retired, then ordered the servants to drive on; and turning to Catharine—

'I now feel how much cause you have to regard me as you do, Catharine. You have considered me as calmly persevering in completing your wretchedness, without an effort to make escape possible. I am not surprised that you could not bring yourself to say I deserved forgiveness.'

'Forgiveness! Mr Dunallan,' repeated Catharine, 'I now see too plainly who it is that has most—that has all to forgive. I can scarcely, however, hope that you can pardon this last——,' she hesitated; 'Yet if you could suspend forming your judgment on this, to me, unaccountable proceeding of my father's, I feel certain he will be able to convince you that his motives were perfectly honourable.' Catharine again burst into tears, overpowered and mortified beyond expression.

'I am convinced, my dearest Catharine, that, according to Lord Dunallan's views, they were perfectly so,' replied Dunallan. 'I have had many conversations with him. I hoped to have induced him at least to have given me time to attempt to overcome the prejudices with which you met me; but he seemed to feel that his engagement to my father made every moment of delay, which he could prevent, a breach of honour on his part. And you know, Catharine, that, independently of all this, a father is fully entitled to be acquainted with the contents of any letter addressed to his child while she remains under his protection. I shall now only say, that my object in writing these letters was, to make you aware that my promise to my father was entirely conditional, and was to be considered cancelled if you were averse to its completion. I hoped that the knowledge of this might have put it in your power to be free.'



Catharine shook her head.

‘Your father assured me that you did not desire to be free; but your every look contradicted the assertion.’

‘My promise was never conditional,’ said Catharine; ‘that could have made no change on my part.’

‘It might, however, on the part I should have taken, Catharine. But that is past.’

Catharine at once saw his meaning. ‘Yes; that is past!’ repeated she emphatically. ‘Now, I see too plainly how unjustly, how childishly, how madly I have acted! Mr Dunallan, I will now say I have perceived your opinion of me. I have resented it; but you have not been unjust; I have deserved it. I can scarcely hope ever to obtain your forgiveness, but——’

‘Dearest Catharine, do not talk thus,’ interrupted Dunallan; ‘let us exchange forgiveness for the past. Neither have been quite free from blame with regard to the other; but far, far the greatest share belongs to me. When I last renewed my promise to my father, I ought to have been more firm to my own sense of right—to my own principles.’

‘In our promises, Mr Dunallan,’ said Catharine mournfully, ‘I must feel that we have been more sinned against than sinning; but I wish not to remember this.’

‘No, dearest Catharine, it is not our part to remember it. Let us only remember our own share in what is past; and where we have erred, let us begin to attempt averting those painful consequences which are always attendant on error.’

‘If that were possible,’ said Catharine still mournfully.

‘It may be possible, dearest Catharine. Allow me to attempt to prove this to you.’ Dunallan now spoke in a cheerful tone of voice. ‘We have brought the past in some measure into the light of reality and truth; may I venture to go for a moment into the future. You know that in a few weeks I must leave Arnmore. I fear that during those few weeks, your father will not be satisfied unless you remain there also; but you shall, my dearest Catharine, be as free at Arnmore as you were at Dunallan Castle. Your cousin Elizabeth has promised to come to you. I earnestly wished she could have accompanied us now; but to this Lord Dunallan objected. My aunt leaves Arnmore



immediately, unless you should wish her to be your guest until your cousin joins you. Miss Lennox, or any friend of yours, will, I am sure, find pleasure in making the solitude of Arnmore less tedious to you. In short, my dear Catharine, my part in attempting to do away the painful consequences of my errors regarding you, shall first be to anticipate your every wish as far as it is in my power. Only let me know your wishes. I now consider your happiness as my first earthly care. As to myself, Catharine,' Dunallan became embarrassed; but recovering himself, 'I do not know in what character to ask you to consider me. To that which the ceremony of the last hour seemed to entitle me, I shall never lay claim, while you feel for me as you do at present. Nothing on earth, Catharine,' added he earnestly, 'could induce me to remind you of that claim, while you so evidently detest it. You have just said, that you have perceived what opinion I have formed of you, and have resented it. Your adding this, proves to me that you have been mistaken. I shall say no more now. I know how little any profession of regard from one, for whom you feel as you do for me, can be agreeable to you. Yet, may I ask you to attempt to forget many things which I know you have heard against me: to judge of me for yourself, as of one whose character, from circumstances now unavoidable, you would wish to be such as you could esteem.'

'I should certainly wish most earnestly to do so, Mr Dunallan,' replied Catharine.

'Let it be so then, Catharine. Attempt to consider me as one, who is really still almost a stranger to you, but who most earnestly desires to obtain a place in your esteem. Is this settled, Catharine?'

'Yes,' replied Catharine; 'if you too, Mr Dunallan, would attempt the same with regard to me'—she spoke with embarrassment, and blushed as she spoke; but the tone of her voice had resumed something of its usual animation; and Dunallan's joyful assent to her wish, as far as it was possible, settled the arrangement for the few following weeks. 'If at the end of those weeks of my probation,' said Dunallan, 'you can feel for me differently;—but I shall say no more now.'

From that moment Dunallan's manner became frank and



unembarrassed, and he began to converse on subjects just sufficiently connected with their present situation to render them deeply interesting. He at last spoke of Arnmore, and mentioned his aunt. Catharine made some enquiries respecting this new relation, and was soon in tears while listening to a few particulars of her melancholy story, and to Dunallan's description of her resignation, her restored cheerfulness, her active life.

'She shall herself tell you the source of her cheerfulness and strength of mind, Catharine,' said Dunallan; and then passing to other subjects, his unrestrained, but gentle and respectful manner, gradually led Catharine to converse and feel at ease with him, and almost to forget that he was the same dreaded Dunallan, whose presence had so long been a restraint to her, and the idea of whom her constant misery. She soon conversed freely with him, looked with interest for his answer, or for the impression made on him by the sentiments and opinions she was led to express, and which his countenance instantly betrayed. He still differed frequently from her, both in feeling and in opinion; but a mild indulgence, and an anxious desire to explain his reason for differing, joined to great apparent pleasure when he had won her to his way of thinking, made even difference of opinion agreeable.

'You are leading me on to tell you my inmost thoughts, that you may condemn them,' said she to him, after having expressed an opinion from which she saw he differed.

'Not to condemn, dearest Catharine. I only wish our opinions were the same on every subject.'

'I wish so too,' replied she, smiling; 'I know who would be the gainer. However, I can bear to differ from you now; at Dunallan Castle I could not.'

'Because at Dunallan Castle, when you differed from me, all your friends did so also, particularly Mr St Clair, who always made your argument his own. Had he really dissented because his opinions were different, I ought either to have tried to convince him, or to be convinced by him; but as he merely wished to make a merit with you by differing from me, and would have done the same had you argued on the opposite side, I thought it best to be silent, though I saw the unfavourable



impression my silence made on you ; but I dreaded losing my temper also, and then a quarrel must have been the consequence ; and you, Catharine, do not perhaps know how important it is for a man, professing the principles I do, to guard against being brought, by his own loss of temper, into a situation from which those principles forbid his extricating himself in the usual way. I sometimes too felt for Mr St Clair. You know, Catharine, he deserved pity ; yet I think he ought to have pitied me also ; for surely seeing, as he must have done, how repugnant to your feelings my presence was, he would not have changed situations with me.'

'Thank Heaven,' said Catharine, emphatically, 'that Mr St Clair was not in your situation !'

Dunallan's smile of pleasure brought a blush to Catharine's cheek ; but he turned away, and soon again spoke as if he had not perceived it.

The travellers stopt during the hottest part of the day at the beautiful village of B——. Catharine had remarked Dunallan's uncommon powers of conversation, even at Dunallan Castle, where he had been checked and restrained by the cold looks and manners of most of the party. This day she had felt those powers in their full force. She scarcely observed how time passed. An hour after she had been with him, she had forgotten the peculiarity of their situation, which seldom again returned to her recollection, excepting when a change of horses, or other incidents, interrupted conversation, and drew her attention from the last interesting sentence he had uttered. When, however, she learnt, on leaving the village of B——, that they were within a few miles of Arnmore, her thoughts became too powerfully oppressive for even Dunallan's conversation to suspend or overcome. It was evening—a calm grey evening after a day of bright sunshine. A soft mist rose from the fields, and enveloped the lower parts of the woods, and slowly ascended the hills.

Catharine had answered Dunallan several times without scarcely having heard what he said. She thought of her approaching interview with his aunt ; of being received as the wife of Dunallan ; of him also, though she heard not what he said ; of his consideration for her ; of his delicacy and kindness.



‘I may trust him,’ thought she, ‘but how will his aunt receive me? Can she know our feelings for each other?’ She sighed deeply. At last Dunallan addressed her in a tone so very serious, yet so mild, that it immediately arrested her attention.

‘I ought, I believe, my dear Catharine, to prepare you for some singularities which you will meet with at Arnmore. You know my opinions on some subjects are very different from those you have been accustomed to consider just and rational. At Arnmore you will find those opinions influence all around you, and this at first may be irksome, or even may disgust you; but let me entreat you not to form your opinions until you have examined for yourself. Do not let prejudice mislead you. I once thought as you now do, Catharine: may Heaven avert from you the painful means by which my eyes were opened!’

Catharine listened with fixed attention.

‘I will not say more now, Catharine; I only ask that in one thing you will oblige me. I do not prescribe to you, however, remember, dearest Catharine.’

‘Whatever you ask,’ interrupted she, ‘I am ready to comply with.’

‘All I wish is, that you will submit to some new forms you will find in our mode of living at Arnmore—at least until you are convinced they are wrong.’

‘Is this all?’ said Catharine. ‘But may I ask what are those opinions which I still entertain, and by the relinquishing of which you think your eyes were opened? What are they?’

‘One is, my dear Catharine——’

An acclamation of joy interrupted Dunallan. ‘It is Mr Dunallan! They are coming! They are coming! Welcome! Welcome! God bless you, Sir!’ echoed on all sides, and the carriage was instantly surrounded by people,—young, old, women, children,—all joining in the shout of joy and welcome. Catharine shrunk back; Dunallan entreated her not to be disturbed, saying he would ‘stop those congratulations,—so unseasonable,’ added he.

An old man now approached, his blue bonnet in his hand, and his grey hairs gently moved from his thin temples by the wind. ‘God bless you, Sir! God bless your lady!’ Then,



looking with apparent delight at Catharine, 'May she, for your sake, Sir, be as gude as she is bonny! We have come to be the first to meet and wish you joy, Sir.' Then addressing Catharine, 'There's no ane amang us but wad hae been wanderers in a strange country, and cast out frae our hames, if it hadna been for our young laird; but he likes gratefu' hearts on his estate rather than new schemes. He's the only gentleman in a' the country that——'

'My good M'Donald,' interrupted Dunallan, 'we thank you; but have you forgotten that young ladies do not like such noisy welcomes? We shall soon see you at your own houses, but let us pass quietly now; and tell my other friends around you, that I entreat them also to reserve their welcomes till another time for their young lady.'

The old man now smiled; 'I had forgotten, Sir, that one sae near to you could feel aught but joy.' Dunallan, colouring, drew up the glass, and they passed on, though the people looked disappointed at their well-meant congratulations being so ill received. When they had left this party at some distance, Dunallan stopped the carriage, and gave an order to a servant, which Catharine did not hear; but the man galloped forward, and, though they passed many cottages and farm houses, there were no more congratulations. The people, who stood in their doors, though in their Sunday clothes, and evidently prepared to bid them welcome, were satisfied with respectfully taking off their hats, while the women curtsied, and motioned to the children to be quiet; or, still more anxious to please, some went into their houses whilst the carriage passed, and then followed it with a fervently uttered, 'God bless him!'

'And this is the man,' thought Catharine, 'who dismissed his father's old domestics without reward, and who, I understood, was the most severe of landlords!' She looked at him. He seemed absorbed in thought, but not of an agreeable nature. He looked sad.

'It distresses me to have your people checked in their demonstrations of joy,' said Catharine, in the softest tone of voice.

He started from his reverie. 'Oh, it does not signify,—they will have other opportunities. Their feelings are not my present



care, dear Catharine. I thought of you, and am anxious to save you from their heartfelt, but noisy, and perhaps rude, expressions of joy, at an event which has only caused you pain. Yet I should wish you to feel an interest in the happiness of beings who will now be so much influenced by you; for the people on this estate are so devotedly attached to its proprietors, that they will do anything they think pleasing to those beloved by them.'

'Does this attachment go along with the estate?' asked Catharine, smiling.

'Certainly,' replied Dunallan, and smiled also.

They had been for some time driving slowly up a steep ascent, and saw nothing on either side but the darkly-shaded trunks of the straight firs which skirted the woods near the road. When they had reached the highest part of the ascent, the mist had cleared away. And a bright setting sun glowed on the beautiful scenery of Arnmore, which now lay before them. It seemed as if nature had formed an immense amphitheatre of mountains, to shelter all that was soft and picturesque within their bosom. The castle stood on a rocky promontory, raised boldly from the lake which washed its base, and now reflecting the lengthened rays of the departing sun, appeared 'a sheet of gold,' with woods hanging in luxuriance upon its deep and broken shores. The descent into this paradise was rapid. Catharine had scarcely time to recover from her surprise and delight, when they entered the noble avenue which led to the Castle. Dunallan turned to her. 'Let me now welcome you, Catharine, to your new abode, and again declare, before Him who is present everywhere, that you have only to tell me what you wish, and it shall be my first care to endeavour to gratify you.'

Catharine hesitated. 'My first wish is to know what you consider right—to live a useful life.'

'Dear Catharine, then you cannot live unhappily: with such resolutions, no situation can make you so.'

They drove on in silence. Dunallan seemed to avoid looking at Catharine, and at a loss. He pulled up the glasses, and let them down again, several times. Catharine's heart beat violently, yet her feelings were rather pleasurable. Often during



her journey had she asked herself, 'Is this the day I so much dreaded?' And even now, though trembling and embarrassed, her heart felt light and happy.

'My aunt!' said Dunallan, with a look of pleasure, as they drove up to the door.

A lady and two children stood on the steps. The carriage door was open in an instant. Catharine trembled so violently that Dunallan almost lifted her out.

'My aunt Mrs Oswald, my dear Catharine.'

Mrs Oswald received and pressed Catharine to her bosom with the tenderness of a mother: 'God bless you, and make you a blessing, my dearest niece.'

She then still more joyfully embraced her nephew, and the children clung around him. The servants seemed to join in the general joy, and looked delighted when, turning to them, he said he hoped all were well and happy. He then offered his arm to Catharine, and led her into an apartment that overlooked the lake, saying in a low voice, while they advanced towards a window, 'You will have little more of this kind to undergo, dear Catharine.' He then turned to his aunt, and to the children, who sprung into his arms, which he now opened to receive them. Catharine looked at them clinging round his neck, and fondly leaning their little faces on his, with an emotion that brought tears into her eyes. She remembered they were the children of that sister whom he was accused of having treated cruelly. She felt that it was impossible, and that Dunallan's character must have been traduced.

Mrs Oswald appeared to be between forty and fifty,—still handsome, though dressed quite like an old woman; the expression of her countenance very cheerful, and singularly pleasing, from its lively openness. She addressed Catharine with such sweet and easy kindness, yet with so much of the dignity of an elder woman and a parent, that Catharine at once felt affection and respect for her.

Dunallan brought the children to Catharine. 'I regard these little girls as my children. They are orphans, or more than orphans,' added he, in a lower tone. 'Do you like children, Catharine?'



‘Extremely,’ replied she ; and her manner to them showed that she also knew how to win their little hearts.

An hour after, the party were seated in the same window ; Mrs Oswald and Catharine becoming every moment more intimate, and an expression of regard and admiration increasing in the countenances of both, while Dunallan listened to their conversation in almost silent pleasure. One of the little girls kept close to him, and seemed never to tire of looking at him. Her lovely little fair head rested on his breast, and formed a beautiful contrast with the manly complexion and dark hair of Dunallan, who truly seemed to feel all a father’s tenderness for her. The other child had been won by Catharine’s caresses to remain with her, and sat in her lap, her eyes fixed on Catharine’s face as she spoke, and now and then attracting her notice by her little attempts to join in what passed. The children’s maid at last appeared, to summon them to bed. They flew to Dunallan to be again folded to his breast. ‘Good night. God bless my dear little girls,’ said he, kissing them affectionately.

‘Good night, aunt Oswald, good night,’ and approaching Catharine, ‘what shall I call you?’ said the little thing who had been in her lap.

Catharine hesitated and blushed.

‘Aunt Dunallan,’ said Mrs Oswald.

‘Good night, aunt Dunallan, my dear aunt Dunallan. But why are you my aunt?’ asked the child.

‘Go, go,’ said Dunallan quickly.

They flew away, but the eldest returned and looked in Dunallan’s face. ‘Were you angry?’ ‘No.’ He whispered something in her ear ; she looked at Catharine, who held out her hand to her. The child approached and kissed the hand she offered with a look as if she thought her something very mysterious, and then went away.

When the children retired, Catharine felt the smallness of the party a restraint. She turned to the window. The lake still glowed with the reflection of the sky. Dunallan rose and stood by her. Mrs Oswald drew her chair closer, and kindly taking Catharine’s hand in hers, ‘Let us have no reserves, my dear Catharine,’ said she, ‘no secrets. I know all about you—you



probably know something about me too—enough, at least, to lead you to believe that I have nothing to do in this world now, but to prepare for another, and endeavour to promote the happiness of those around me, as far as I may have the means of doing so. I know with what reluctance you came to us—a most natural reluctance. But try to forget all these unhappy circumstances, and to look upon us as relations with whom you are still unacquainted. Try to banish all prejudice against us.’

Catharine warmly returned the pressure of her hand with which Mrs Oswald concluded. ‘I shall try to forget every thing,’ replied she with emotion, ‘but your reception of a person who must unintentionally have occasioned you much pain. I too wish most anxiously for perfect openness. I acknowledge I did come to you with reluctance; and,’ added she, smiling sweetly, ‘I believe my presence was not greatly desired. I entreat you will also forget all prejudices against me.’

‘Oh,’ said Mrs Oswald, ‘we know there have been attempts to sow discord, when every benevolent feeling ought to have led to the reverse.’

A servant now entered, said something in an under tone of voice to Dunallan, and then retired.

‘Catharine,’ said Dunallan, with some embarrassment in his manner, ‘I have now to entreat you to join us in one of the singular customs I prepared you to meet at Arnmore.’

‘Certainly,’ replied she, accepting the arm he offered, though she began to tremble from apprehension of she knew not what. Mrs Oswald leant on Dunallan’s other arm, and he led them into the library, where a number of servants were assembled. They stood respectfully, until Dunallan placed Catharine and his aunt, one on each side, and then seated himself between them. A table stood before him, on which lay a large Bible, and other books. He turned over the leaves of one, and when he had found the hymn he sought, presented it to Catharine, and then named it to the others. Dunallan himself began the song of praise, but he appeared embarrassed, and his voice at first was scarcely audible. Mrs Oswald, however, the instant she caught the air, joined her full clear notes, with which the servants soon mingled theirs. Catharine could not join. She now found herself pre-



sent at one of those very scenes which had, during Dunallan's late visit at her father's, been frequently chosen by St Clair as the subject of his most pointed ridicule, and which he had described in terms so completely ludicrous, that Catharine had often joined in the laugh he excited. It was true that she had many times, during her evening walks at Dunallan Castle, stopped to listen to the hymn of the cottagers, and St Clair himself had participated in the pleasure excited by those strains of simple piety; but a gentleman, a man of education, knowing the habits of the world, himself singing psalms, acting parson before his family and domestics! How utterly ridiculous! Catharine now remembered how often Dunallan had been present when such scenes had been the subject of ridicule, and also how much the gravity of his looks, or his defence of those who engaged in them, had increased St Clair's eagerness to hold them up to derision. It was impossible Dunallan could have forgotten all this, or the part she herself had taken; and she now felt ashamed, and ventured not to join, feeling that if she did, he must regard her, during a service esteemed sacred by him, as a mere hypocrite—the character she had been taught to associate with the idea of those in her own class who made any such open parade, she once would have called it, of religion. While Catharine sat occupied with these thoughts, her head bent forward over her book of hymns, and her colour heightened by so many recollections, and by the consciousness that she must be an object of attention to those around her, Dunallan had regained his self-command, and his fine manly voice now bore its full share in the hymn. Catharine's feelings, however, remained contradictory and confused. The melody was sweet and pleasing. Surely it must be right thus to join in worshipping God; but still her early associations of ridicule returned, and she felt relieved when the hymn was concluded. Dunallan then began to read a portion of scripture, in a voice so deeply serious and impressive, that Catharine's whole attention was rivetted to the subject. She was in the habit of reading the scriptures at stated times, and admired and loved particular passages; but, on the whole, the sacred volume appeared to her involved in an obscurity which she thought it almost culpable to remark, even



to herself. She had imbibed this impression in her early childhood, from the veneration with which her mother taught her to regard the word of God, and which was ever afterwards associated with the sacred idea of her departed parent. This gave her an uneasy and superstitious apprehension, when she ventured to use her own powers of reasoning on any point she could not comprehend, or reconcile to what, in other cases, appeared reasonable. She had been shocked by hearing others speak slightly on a subject which was connected in her feelings with all that was most sacred. She never, therefore, conversed with her father, or with almost any one on the subject, because she seldom found any one's feelings meet hers. Dunallan's voice and manner, however, recalled her earlier impressions, and she listened with delight, mingled with awe, to the sublime passage he had chosen. When any particularly obscure sentence occurred, Dunallan stopped, and in the most simple and correctly pure language, gave either his own ideas on the subject, or those of some approved commentator, which to him appeared conclusive, and which Catharine, on each occasion, felt perfectly satisfactory, and worthy of the subject. She felt grieved when he closed the sacred volume. All now knelt down to prayer; but here Catharine was again less pleased. The deep humility of Dunallan's confessions, she could scarcely conceive to be sincere, and his exulting thanksgivings for the mercies of Christianity, seemed unlike the simple trueness of his usual expressions. Yet, as he proceeded, he at times spoke a language which reached her inmost soul; and when he concluded, she certainly felt her respect for him unaccountably increased. The servants, with an appearance of respect for their young master, approaching to veneration, gratefully replied to those kind and friendly inquiries with which he noticed some of them, as they left the apartment.

Mrs Oswald held out her hand to Catharine:—‘How do you like our strange ways, my dear young friend?’ asked she.

Catharine warmly pressed her hand, ‘Part of them very much,’ replied she.

‘And what part do you dislike, my dear?’

‘*Dislike* is a strong word. I will not say, my dear Mrs Os-



wald, that I *dislike* any part; but——' she hesitated, and looked towards Dunallan. He had again opened the Bible, and stood with his hand resting upon it, while he seemed to listen for her reply to Mrs Oswald's question.

'May I ask you to read this passage, Catharine?' said he. She immediately approached.

'I felt it too sacred,' continued he, 'when arguing, as you have heard me do with Mr St Clair. His levity on these subjects was so unconquerable.'

Catharine read the passage to which he pointed. It was this:—'And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.'<sup>1</sup>

'You remember what precedes and follows this, Catharine?' added Dunallan.

'I do,' said Catharine, instantly solemnized.

'Then I am sure you will agree with me in thinking that our feelings cannot be in the state they ought to be, if we have any disposition to ridicule an act of devotion sanctioned by this example, or if the dread of such ridicule should make us shrink from performing it.'

*er* 'Assuredly, Mr Dunallan,' replied Catharine, blushing even to tears at the recollection of what she now considered her own impiety. Dunallan immediately changed the subject; but Catharine, when again alone, revolved in her thoughts, and felt humbled in her own opinion, while she thought how justly, yet how gently, Dunallan had conveyed reproof. These thoughts, however, were not pleasing; and she hoped that, on the morrow, she would find means to gain a higher place in Dunallan's esteem.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

TO-MORROW morning came; and, with it, Martin rejoiced to have an opportunity of opening her heart to her young lady.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 30.



‘Oh, Ma’am,’ began she, ‘every one here is so kind! Mrs Scott told me, that Mrs Oswald said she would trust to her to find out the way to make me happy and comfortable; so Mrs Scott just told me, and begged me to say frankly, what would make me so on all occasions, for that Mrs Oswald would be sadly displeased if they did not find means to make my new abode pleasant to me. And, Ma’am, Mrs Scott says you put her in mind of Mr Dunallan’s mother, whom she served long ago; but she did not stay in the house after her death, because the last housekeeper was not a person she liked to be under; so she went to Mrs Oswald, who has been so kind to her, that she says she owes more than this world’s happiness to her: but she says, too, Ma’am, that if you look as gently at her as you did at me when you spoke to me, she could serve you on her knees.’ Martin’s next theme Catharine listened to with more pleasure, for it was all in praise of Dunallan, ‘who,’ she said, ‘seemed to be quite idolized by his servants.’

‘There is not one of them,’ proceeded she, ‘who would leave him to serve any gentleman in the country, Mrs Scott says; and yet he is very strict, and suffers no servant to stay a night in the house after he has broken through any rule he has established; and this he desires they may be positively warned of, when they are hired. He has turned off four men within the last six months, although he afterwards was very kind to them, till they found other means of subsistence, and took pains himself to convince them of the evil of their practices. Whenever a new servant enters the house, Mr Dunallan converses with him in private, and gives him books to read; and he desires Mr Gray, the steward, to take care that the men shall have time to read morning and evening, if they are so disposed; and, at any rate, they must be in the house; and they are, in general, anxious to read the books given them by Mr Dunallan, as he often sends for them, and inquires whether they understand and like what they have read, and takes much pains to instruct them. Mrs Oswald takes the same care of the women; and Mrs Scott asked me, Ma’am, whether I had been used with such care at Dunallan Castle. I said that nobody could be kinder to their servants than you, Ma’am, and that you always set them



a good example: and Mrs Scott said, that you indeed looked like an angel.'

'Oh, Martin,' replied Catharine, 'you have done me more than justice; you see there may be better mistresses.'

Martin began to defend her young lady. 'No, no, Martin,' interrupted Catharine, 'do not trouble yourself to recollect all my goodness, as you call it. I hope Mrs Oswald will teach me to be really a good mistress.'

'O, my dear young lady,' exclaimed Martin, her heart beginning to overflow at her eyes, 'I always said, you only needed to know what an angel was to become one yourself; for you have, ever since you were a child, and spoiled by every one about you, always liked that person best who most freely told you what was right, whether they thought it likely to please you or not. Oh! Ma'am, I remember when Mr Dunallan was a very young gentleman, and you Ma'am quite a child, you used sometimes to come away from every body to me, so unhappy and vexed; and when I tried to amuse or comfort you, you would tell me that Edward (as you called him then) had said you were passionate, or proud, or unkind to Miss Elizabeth; and then you used to cry so, Ma'am, and say, "Edward thinks so, and it must be true. Do not say I am good, Martin, but tell me how I can learn not to be passionate nor proud." Ah, Ma'am, you liked Mr Dunallan better than any body then.'

Catharine sighed, and looked so grave, that Martin finished her duties without saying another word. When she was gone, Catharine sat down at a window, her watch in her hand, at once to be prepared for the hour of morning prayer, and to view the romantic scenery which lay before her; but while her eyes wandered over its varied beauties, her thoughts were soon fixed on a subject too powerfully interesting to be long forgotten—her own situation, and Dunallan's singular character. Her feelings for him had very much changed since the preceding morning. Still, however, she scarcely knew what she felt. 'I have been completely mistaken,' thought she, 'in supposing him cold and selfish. Mrs Oswald, and all around him, regard him with as much love as respect. This could not be inspired, unless he discovered feelings of the same nature to them. The children,



too,'—she felt softened when she recollected his caressing and fondly affectionate treatment of them. 'Amiable being!' thought she, 'how much he seems formed for domestic happiness! and in this to be compelled to give up his own inclinations, and abandon all hopes of ever finding what he is so peculiarly fitted to enjoy; yet so just to me! so feeling for my situation! so delicate! so considerate! his every look, every word, so calculated to restore me to perfect tranquillity and confidence. Yesterday at this time, I supposed him all sternness and pride: this morning I could wish he were less gentle—less overcomingly delicate and considerate. The contrast is painful.' The recollection of all she had heard against his character returned to her thoughts. 'What an inexplicable being!' thought she, 'yet why should I wish to know that all these unfavourable traits are false? I almost believe them to be so; but I do not wish to know that his manner is really no more engaging than his heart is perfect. I do not wish to know that I have been so unjust to him,—so unwise to myself.' She thought of his singularities,—his prayers,—his strict notions. 'What must he think of me, educated as I have been? He must feel that I am incapable of entering into his ideas, or of being his friend and companion. He seems to feel for me as a child whom he has been the unfortunate means of injuring, and whom he must therefore soothe and indulge, and lull me, if possible, into a forgetfulness of my real situation. Oh! that I could convince him, that proud, and thoughtless, and self-willed, and spoiled by prosperity, as he thinks I am, and as I too often feel myself to be, that I, too, aspire after perfection.' A gentle tap at the door startled her. She opened it. It was Mrs Oswald and the children.

'Quite ready! that is right my love,' said that kind lady.

The children threw their little arms around Catharine. 'Sweet loves,' said she, pressing them with tenderness to her bosom.

Mrs Oswald seemed greatly pleased: 'They will not be orphans I see,' said she; 'but come, it is time for prayers.'

Dunallan was alone when they entered the library. He received Catharine with a look of pleasure; but he appeared grave, and immediately rang for the servants.



Catharine again sat by him ; and, whilst she now joined her voice with his in their morning hymn of adoration, she felt as if she partook in the pure devotion which seemed to inspire him. Again he read, and again she listened with the most fixed attention. He prayed ; and the earnest desires of his soul for higher degrees of purity in thought, in motive, in action, in feeling, than she had ever conceived, led her to feel the distance at which she still remained from his ideas of perfection ; while his lowly confessions of time misspent, and his ardent supplications that all might feel the deep importance of the short and fleeting moments on which so much depended, cast a gloom over her spirits.

‘What a degree of perfection you require,’ said she to him when the servants left the room. ‘I should despair, if I thought Heaven required such impossible strictness of thought and motive. Do you believe, Mr Dunallan, that we are capable of making our hearts so perfect?’

He looked mildly at her for a moment, then said, in a serious tone, ‘I do not think that we are capable to command a single good thought. Scripture says so, and my own experience confirms the declarations of Scripture to my own mind. But,’ added he, ‘you seem half displeased with me, Catharine.’

‘I only do not comprehend you,’ replied she. ‘My dear Mrs Oswald, I appeal to you, has he not contradicted himself! He first describes a degree of perfection, which, if necessary, is quite alarming to such erring creatures ; and then says, to prevent all attempt even, that we are incapable of thinking a good thought.’

‘And yet, my dear,’ replied Mrs Oswald, ‘contradictory as this may appear, it is the fact ; for the Scriptures say, that “without holiness” we cannot see heaven, and also declare our inability to think a good thought.’

‘Oh ! do not puzzle me with such contradictions,’ exclaimed Catharine earnestly, ‘I wish to know your opinions. My heart tells me I have regarded these matters too slightly. I find that those who attend most to them always have most influence with me. Mr Dunallan, I entreat you to explain yourself.’

‘My dear Catharine, I had no intention to trifle with so



important a subject. You forget that I was not describing what man may attain by his own exertions; I was imploring the assistance of Heaven to produce in our souls that purity which true Christianity always leads us to sigh after, however deficient we may be.'

Catharine sighed and looked unsatisfied.

'You are not quite convinced that I am right, Catharine,' said Dunallan: 'but you know, I prepared you to meet strange customs and strange opinions at Arnmore; and I think you promised, at least you assented to my wish, not to form your opinion of us, till you had examined impartially our reasons for differing from many around us.'

'Oh, certainly I shall not,' replied Catharine; 'I had forgotten that I was to act as an impartial judge. From what I have already seen, however, I feel inclined to expect perfection, and am disappointed when I cannot understand what I see and hear.'

'Perfection!' exclaimed Dunallan; 'was it not an aspiration after perfection which displeased you?'

'Oh, that kind of perfection! yes, because it is quite different from the kind I mean, and is far too sacred for common life.'

'I must not discuss this subject with you now, Catharine,' replied Dunallan, taking her hand, and then Mrs Oswald's, and drawing each within his arm, 'because I have an engagement in half an hour, and we must go to breakfast; but, may I ask you to examine the sentiment you have just expressed, and tell me, when we meet again in this place of strange customs and conversations, if you think it—may I say,' he looked smilingly in her face, 'rational? Catharine, you must not be displeased with me: you know I have always been plain with you.'

'I am not displeased,' replied Catharine. 'If I am irrational in my sentiments, it is not from intention; and I only wait to be convinced.'

'Sweet girl,' said Mrs Oswald; 'but come away, or this strange man must go to his appointment without any breakfast.' She hurried before them into the breakfast-room, and seated herself so as to leave Catharine to preside.



‘Mrs Oswald, this is your place,’ said Catharine, when Dunallan led her to the vacant seat.

‘No, indeed, my love,’ replied Mrs Oswald, ‘I never take any trouble I can possibly avoid.’ And she looked up in Catharine’s face, smiling with so much archness of expression, that Catharine seated herself immediately, to escape Dunallan’s looks, who stood by her till the delicate point was settled. Catharine felt her face glow, and her hand trembled as she proceeded to do the duties of her place.

‘This is always a very sociable hour at Arnmore, my dear Catharine,’ said Mrs Oswald; ‘always a comfortable, old-fashioned breakfast, from which no one ever thinks of being absent. It is my delight,’ continued Mrs Oswald, ‘to see every one assemble first at prayers, and then to easy and friendly conversation at breakfast, when our very hearts seem to feel as if the freshness of morning had risen upon them, as our sweet Mrs Williams says.’

Catharine again felt her face glow, on recollecting the conversation which had passed at Dunallan Castle, and what Elizabeth had heard Dunallan say of her. ‘Is Mrs Williams a near neighbour?’ asked she.

‘Yes; but we shall not see her for a few days,’ replied Mrs Oswald.

‘I long much to be acquainted with her,’ said Catharine, looking at Dunallan, ‘I shall then perhaps learn what perfection is.’

‘No,’ replied he, smiling, ‘her own account of herself at least is very different.’

Dunallan was obliged to hasten away immediately after breakfast. Mrs Oswald then led Catharine through the house, and afterwards to the garden, and some of the nearest of the beautiful walks which surrounded the castle. Catharine greatly admired everything she saw. In the house all was propriety, with the most elegant simplicity and comfort. The servants seemed most carefully attended to; and in their looks and manner showed the respect and affection they felt for Mrs Oswald, and their anxiety to recommend themselves to the notice of their young lady. The cottagers they met during their walk appeared



equally pleased and respectful. Mrs Oswald addressed them kindly, and seemed acquainted with all their concerns. 'I must show you our village,' said she to Catharine, as they were slowly returning towards the house. They then descended a wooded path which led towards the lake; and after many windings, they arrived at a range of rocky cliffs, from which, in extensive and very picturesque grounds, on the borders of the lake, were seen many neat cottages, separated from each other by the rocky unevenness of the ground, or by trees, or small and beautifully verdant fields, or by nicely cultivated little gardens. The mixture of wood, and rocks, and cottages, covered with honeysuckle and wild roses, with their irregular fields and gardens, sometimes surrounded with wood, sometimes enclosed by rocks of the most romantic wildness, sometimes encroaching on the steep sides of the hills which enclosed them, all formed a scene of singular beauty. Catharine contemplated all around her with delight.

'That village contains upwards of four hundred inhabitants,' said Mrs Oswald, 'and their improvement is Dunallan's favourite pursuit. The late Mr Dunallan, who never objected to any plan proposed by his son, consented to his attempting this improvement, to induce his tenants to give up their little farms willingly. Dunallan was quite as much aware as his father, of the disadvantages of having an estate divided into these small farms; but he reprobated the plan followed by many country gentlemen, of at once throwing a number of them into one, and suffering the miserable people to emigrate with their families to distant countries. He prevailed on his father, therefore, to suffer the old tenants to remain, but invited their sons to this village, where they receive a small piece of ground, a boat, and fishing materials. The young men are, by these means, enabled to marry soon, and in a short time become so attached to this village, that, at their fathers' deaths, they have no desire to return to their farms, which fall, without trouble, into the hands of the landlord. Dunallan's plans have arrived at wonderful perfection, considering how short his visits at home were, during his father's life.'

'And why, may I ask, were his visits so short, my dear Mrs



Oswald?' said Catharine. 'Surely such cold disregard of a father was not quite consistent with Mr Dunallan's strict principles.'

'I think his conduct was quite so, my dear,' replied Mrs Oswald; 'I do not believe a parent's shame can be witnessed by a child, without lessening the respect he ought to feel.'

'Shame! What do you mean, my dear Madam?'

'Is it possible, Catharine, you do not know the cause for Dunallan's averseness to home?'

'I never heard any cause assigned.'

'Ah, my dear, Dunallan has had enemies near you. This could not be so great a secret, though my nephew has, I know, borne in silence much undeserved blame. You Catharine ought to know, however, that when Dunallan resided at home, he was obliged to see in his mother's place, one of the lowest and worst of creatures, by whom his father was so infatuated and enslaved, that even his love for his son could not break the bondage, or induce him, even when his son was with him, to offend this woman, by keeping her from appearing when there was no other guest; for this was the manner in which she chose to show her hatred to Dunallan. No situation could be more intolerable to a man of Dunallan's principles and feelings.'

'And he did as he ought in leaving it,' said Catharine, with emphasis. 'I was certain Mr Dunallan must have been innocent of the charges I have heard against him,' added she thoughtfully.

'Have any more of such stories reached you, my dear?'

'Oh, yes: but I shall tell you them all, my dearest Madam; for I long to hear Mr Dunallan cleared from every aspersion. Mr Clanmar is said to have been led into an improper marriage by him.'

'I know he is,' replied Mrs Oswald: 'but here I cannot satisfy you. Dunallan is as secret as death on this subject; from which I, who know him, infer, that Mr Clanmar has been guilty of something very blameable. I have seen them together, and Clanmar certainly regards Dunallan with more than common respect, and Dunallan professes sincere affection for him; but this is all I can say on this point.'



‘And Mr Dunallan’s sister,’ said Catharine.

‘His sister!’ repeated Mrs Oswald; ‘surely it is not possible to represent his conduct to her as anything but kind, tender, generous——’

‘Oh yes,’ interrupted Catharine, ‘it is possible to make it appear cruel—unfeeling——’

‘What a world!’ exclaimed Mrs Oswald. ‘Let us sit down here, my dear Catharine, for I can walk no further, and I shall tell you how cruel and unfeeling he was to her. Poor Maria was Dunallan’s sister by a former marriage, and some years older than he. My sister, the mother of Dunallan, wished most earnestly to have the charge of her, but her mother’s relations expressed the same wish, and her expectations from them being considerable, her father would not suffer her to be taken from them. A few months after the death of my sister, the relation with whom Maria lived died also, leaving her a large fortune. Mr Dunallan entreated me to take charge of her, as there was no remaining relation of her mother’s with whom he chose to entrust her, and his house was not a proper place for a young female. I consented, but soon perceived the difficulty of the task I had undertaken. Beautiful, gentle, ingenuous, and warm in her affections, Maria had gained upon my heart; while her want of steadiness, her sensibility, and neglected education in what was of any real value, kept me in perpetual alarm. Never was any creature more exposed to the dangers of vanity, from the extravagant admiration of the other sex; and, amongst all her suitors, she fixed on the very one I should have least wished her to choose. You have, I dare say, heard of young Mr Harcourt, and of his unbounded extravagance. For three years before he left this country, he was indebted to Dunallan for the supply of every want, though by this means Dunallan’s own income became so limited that he was obliged to deny himself every indulgence. At one time he gave up his horses, at another he dismissed all his servants. Harcourt, with the meanness usually attendant on extravagance, received, unblushingly, all these pecuniary aids from a mere boy, as Dunallan then was. At the end of those three years, one cause of Harcourt’s extravagance became known, for the first time, to



Dunallan. He found that he was depriving himself of every indulgence to supply the expenses of a mistress who had lived with Harcourt for several years. This naturally roused Dunallan's indignation, and after having, with difficulty, procured a situation for Harcourt in India, he positively informed him, that unless he broke off the shameful connection he had formed, and immediately consented to sail for his new destination, he would no longer regard him as a relation. Harcourt knew how dangerous it would be to his interests to displease Dunallan, and promised all he wished. Before he sailed, however, Dunallan discovered that the woman had gone a few weeks before, in another ship, destined to the presidency to which he had been appointed, and where she had a sister married in a low situation. On discovering this, Dunallan came to me almost in despair. Maria's health was then in a very delicate state, having been recently confined by the birth of our little Mary, and the idea of parting from her children, who were too young to be taken to India, had materially increased her illness. I went to her, and proposed her remaining with her children, and suffering Harcourt to proceed to India without her. I found little difficulty in persuading her to do this, her affections were so divided between her husband and children. Harcourt, however, enraged at seeing all further hopes of receiving pecuniary advantage from Dunallan at an end, first insisted on his wife accompanying him, and when he found that she, shocked by the brutality of his letters, and terrified by his violence when he gained admittance to her, was so ill as really to be incapable of undertaking such a voyage, he threatened to take his children; which last project was only prevented by Dunallan's promise to pay him a large annuity as long as he left his wife and children at peace in this country. Poor Maria sunk under his cruel treatment. Dunallan and I accompanied her from place to place, wherever change of climate, or change of scene, held out any hope of restoring peace or strength to her wounded mind and weakened frame,—but in vain; it is now nearly two years since she expired in her brother's arms, after frequently declaring, that he had been the means of leading her to the only true source of happiness, and had taught her that death itself could be wel-



comed as the harbinger of everlasting peace and joy. Her children Dunallan regards as his own. The worthless Harcourt still lives, and has married the wretched woman who seduced his affections from his wife.'

'Unfortunate Maria!' exclaimed Catharine. 'How much is our sex to be pitied,' added she, thoughtfully; 'duped by our affections, or sacrificed to——' she stopt.

'Yes,' said Mrs Oswald, in a gentle tone of voice; 'but misfortune is most severe when we have sought it ourselves. There is a great and unspeakable consolation, my dear Catharine, in feeling, that though we suffer we have not left the path of duty; then we look on misfortune not as a chastisement, but as a purifier. I hope, my dear young friend, you will yet have cause to rejoice in your generous devotion to your father's wishes.'

An approaching footstep interrupted Mrs Oswald. It was Dunallan. He looked at Catharine, then at his aunt—'Am I an intruder?' *u*

'Oh no,' said Catharine; 'but we did not hope to see you.'

'We supposed you were engaged for the whole morning,' said Mrs Oswald.

'On this morning! my dear aunt—no, certainly. I hoped to have returned in time to attend you, but you were fled, and I have been searching every walk for you.'

'You must not think of me, Mr Dunallan,' said Catharine. 'I know you have important affairs to attend to here, which must not be neglected on my account.'

'You know, Catharine, what I consider the most important affair at present entrusted to me. I am sure Mrs Oswald will leave nothing untried to render your situation agreeable to you; but I believe you must allow me, for my own sake, while we are together, to join in the attempt. However, my dear Catharine,' added he, quickly and earnestly, 'your own mind is the source from whence alone I expect you to derive the happiness I so ardently wish for you.' *an*

Catharine smiled, and looked certainly not very unhappy.

'You recollect too well,' said she, 'the account I once gave you of my extreme inconstancy of disposition; but even with-



out supposing that changed, Arnmore is so new a scene to me that I shall not soon be satisfied, I perceive, in exploring its wonders; its mental novelties are, however, I must confess, most interesting to me. You know, Mr Dunallan, you have to convince me that a sentiment I expressed this morning was very irrational.'

'Yes; at least I wished you yourself to discover that it was so.'

'I have not yet had time to examine it.'

'I know you have not, and I almost wish to decline entering on a subject so very serious, when I recollect how frequently I have heard you say, that you detested preaching out of the pulpit.'

'I entreat you, Mr Dunallan,' said Catharine, blushing deeply, 'to forget such foolish speeches of mine. My heart reproached me, I assure you, the moment they were uttered.'

'Well then, my dear ingenuous Catharine,' replied Dunallan, 'I shall do as you desire. Your opinion is, that religion is too sacred a thing to be always present to our thoughts. May I ask you to explain to me why you think so?'

'Because—I think—why, all our lives are occupied with such trifles, it would be almost profane, I think, to mix religious ideas with them.'

'But what, my dear Catharine, do you include in your ideas of religion?'

'I include,' replied Catharine, solemnly, 'belief in that great and glorious Being who has created the universe, and, by his power and wisdom, supports it in existence; whose attributes are beyond our comprehension, but who has in mercy sent his Son to reveal his will to us, and to set us an example of the most perfect, the sublimest virtue.'

'Well, my dearest Catharine, so far our ideas are the same. You regard that revelation of the will of God, then, as a rule to which we ought implicitly to submit?'

'Certainly I do.'

'But that revelation, dear Catharine, talks frequently of "acknowledging God in *all* our ways," of "walking with God," of "trusting in Him continually," of "desiring to please Him in *all* things."'



‘I confess I do not understand such expressions, Mr Dunallan; at least the only meaning I can attach to them does not satisfy me.’

‘But do they not support the opinion that religion may, and ought to be, our constant guide in every thing?’ *li*

‘They certainly do.’

‘Can you recollect any thing in revelation, Catharine, which forbids or condemns innocent pleasures?’

‘No, nothing.’

‘Or any precept which it would not increase our real happiness to obey?’

‘No, not one.’

‘Then why do you think its rules are too sacred to be always present, even in our most cheerful thoughts?’

‘I shall perhaps be convicted of being irrational, I see,’ replied Catharine, smiling; ‘yet my *feelings* still say, that religion would not be at all suitably mixed with our usual occupations or even opinions.’

‘Most true, my dearest Catharine, your feelings say perfectly right; but ought not our occupations and opinions to be made suitable to religion? are we rational in professing ourselves Christians, while our usual common opinions and occupations are such as to necessarily banish the ideas which Christianity inspires?’

‘No—I must allow we are not. But I fear you must entirely new-model the world, Mr Dunallan, before you will be able to prevail on it to be always influenced by such pure and sacred principles.’

‘Ah, Catharine, that is the way we all attempt to escape from disagreeable truths; but each individual of that world has the charge of one heart and one life only.’

‘But that one heart may itself require to be changed perhaps,’ said Catharine.

‘Not perhaps, dear Catharine, most certainly every heart does. Oh, that I could convince you,’ added he with great earnestness and emotion, ‘that you will never know what real happiness is until that one heart is so changed as to willingly, anxiously, desire and endeavour to submit its opinions, its



wishes, its choice of occupations, its every feeling, to be influenced and guided by revelation.'

'I wish it were,' replied Catharine seriously, 'but indeed, I do not expect it ever will. It is not in my nature, I fear, to be a saint,' added she more gaily, 'I must rest satisfied with a more common degree of goodness.'

Dunallan seemed disappointed, and remained silent.

'Do not look so grave, Mr Dunallan,' said Catharine, 'I shall try to do whatever you wish me.'

'Even to become a saint?' asked he, smiling, but rather sadly.

'Yes; even to become a saint, if that is indispensable,' replied she, accepting the arm he offered, and following Mrs Oswald, who had risen, and was proceeding on her walk. Mrs Oswald, however, acknowledged she was fatigued, and Catharine insisted on deferring her visit to the village until next day.

Dunallan studiously avoided the subject of religion during the remainder of the day, though Catharine made many attempts to introduce it. She felt that he had reason to be dissatisfied with the levity of her reply to the earnest kindness of his wishes for her, and she sought for an opportunity to obtain his forgiveness; but she sought in vain. Dunallan found means to change the subject the moment she introduced it, and conversed so agreeably about other things, that for a time she forgot her wish; but some new proof of kindness or consideration on his part soon again brought her fault to her recollection with increased regret.

'Mr Dunallan,' said she at last, when the evening was far spent, 'you will not give me an opportunity to ask your forgiveness for my unpardonably foolish reply to the interest you expressed in my improvement this morning. I think you would forgive me if you knew how much pain the remembrance of it still gives me.'

'I do, from my heart, forgive you, my dear Catharine, though, I confess, you disappointed me. Will you, in your turn, forgive me, if I speak very plainly, very seriously to you now?'

'Indeed I will. I wish you, Mr Dunallan, always to speak so to me.'

'Then, my dearest Catharine, I think I ought to remind you, that even a slight degree of levity on such subjects requires for-



givenness from a higher source. You may *pain* your friend, but the right to be displeased is not mine. Am I too solemn, Catharine?’

‘You are indeed very solemn, Mr Dunallan,’ replied Catharine, tears starting into her eyes.

‘But am I improperly so?’ asked he, with an expression of concern in his countenance.

‘I cannot tell; perhaps not.’

‘Will you examine?’

‘I certainly will.’

‘And can you forgive my plainness?’

‘Yes; and whatever I may feel, I still wish you to be perfectly so with me.’

When Catharine was again alone, she reflected on this conversation, almost wishing to find that Dunallan had been too severe; but the more seriously and candidly she examined the subject, she felt the more convinced that he was right, and that her own mind and feelings were far too slightly alive to the deep importance of religion, and all that was connected with it. Her esteem for Dunallan increased. She felt also that he was deeply interested in her, as every word and look expressed it. The conviction of this was now delightful to her, and animated her with the most earnest desire to understand his character and opinions. She felt certain they were right, and determined to attempt at least to comprehend them. Her imagination easily passed over every difficulty, and pictured the time when she and Dunallan should be united in opinions, in wishes, in pursuits, perhaps in affections. The waking dream was delightful—too delightful to be forsaken, till sleep at last mingled with it its still more unlikely visions.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

NEXT morning Catharine obeyed the summons to prayers, with her determination of the evening before as strong as ever. Full of her new plans to study Dunallan’s opinions, and frankly to



avow her wish to know and be guided by them, she entered the library with her cheek glowing, and her whole manner and appearance unusually animated. Dunallan was alone, and rose to meet her.

‘I need scarcely inquire for your health, Catharine,’ said he smiling, and regarding her with looks of evident admiration.

‘Inquire for my mind’s health,’ replied she, smiling playfully.

‘Those looks, Catharine, bespeak a tranquil mind also.’

‘Well, perhaps they may, for I have just formed a resolution which I hope will in future secure my peace of mind.’

‘May I ask what that resolution is?’

‘Yes, for I cannot put it into execution without your consent.’

‘My consent, dear Catharine! You have it then, whatever your resolution is.’

‘Ah, Mr Dunallan, you do not know what you have promised. Nothing less than to assist and guide me in regulating this mind, which I know you think is in a sad state. Do you retract?’

‘No, dearest Catharine, I thank you for the permission a thousand times. Shall I tell you that I was almost afraid to see you this morning, I dreaded so much that my solemnity last night had disgusted you.’

‘No,’ replied Catharine, ‘on reflection I was convinced you were right. But tell me, how shall I begin the attempt to feel more, and think more, as I ought to do on religious subjects?’

The entrance of Mrs Oswald and the children prevented Dunallan’s reply. Catharine felt disappointed, as the servants immediately followed.

‘We shall not be interrupted,’ said Dunallan, as he led her to the seat next himself, ‘your inquiry may be answered from Scripture;’ and he immediately began to read some verses of a Psalm, in which her question was asked and answered.

Catharine was affected; and her voice, as she sung, betrayed her emotion. Her mingled feelings were almost oppressive, until Dunallan’s prayer gave them language and utterance. She fervently joined in his humble but joyful thanksgivings, for her heart overflowed with gratitude, and when he supplicated with the deepest earnestness that light might be imparted to the still young and ignorant—that their hearts might be attracted



and devoted to their Creator while in the first glow of their early affections—that the great Shepherd of the sheep would gather his lambs into his fold, and preserve them there safe from the allurements and pollutions of the world—the ardent desires of her soul followed his every request, and she felt a delight in these aspirations of devotion greater than she had ever experienced from any earthly enjoyment.

‘You did indeed answer my question,’ said she afterwards to Dunallan, ‘and I understood you, my true friend.’

On this morning Dunallan had no engagement, and offered to attend Catharine to his village. Mrs Oswald begged she might be excused from going.

‘I really am too old to be able to walk everywhere with you, my two young friends,’ said she, ‘and to-day I must visit my school; but if you will call on me there, I shall return home with you.’

‘You seem unwilling to trust yourself with me, Catharine,’ said Dunallan, rather reproachfully, as she hesitated about leaving Mrs Oswald.

‘I am not indeed,’ replied she, blushing, and immediately rose to accompany him.

The day was charming, Dunallan proposed walking to the village by a different way from that Catharine had gone the day before. This was longer, but still more romantic and beautiful, and in several places opened on the most extensive and magnificent views of the lake and surrounding scenery.

In Dunallan, Catharine at last found one who felt the charms of nature with rapture even greater than her own, and who expressed his admiration in a language to which her every feeling replied. She stopped at each step to admire some new beauty. Dunallan appeared delighted with her enthusiasm, and continued to lead her from one picturesque scene to another, that he might point out those views which he himself most admired. Their tastes were the same; and Catharine warmly assented to Dunallan’s remark, that the scenery round Arnmore was exactly the kind which most powerfully excited those feelings of admiration, ‘which are so delightful,’ added he, ‘so purely so, when they elevate the thoughts and affections to the source of all beauty and greatness.’



‘But we are far beyond the village,’ said Dunallan, at last, after they had long wandered on, regardless of time or distance. ‘Thus we pursue pleasure,’ added he, ‘to the neglect of every thing else.’

‘But this surely is innocent pleasure,’ said Catharine.

‘Most innocent, and you can visit my poor village at any time.’

‘Oh, indeed! I long very much to see your village. I shall probably there also forget how time flies.’

‘Ah! Catharine, I wish I knew how to make the time always appear so short to you.’

‘I think I never found it pass away so rapidly as at this Arnmore, which I expected would be so very different,’ said Catharine gaily. ‘But I fear Mrs Oswald must now be waiting for us at her school. We must bid adieu to these charming scenes.’

‘You expected Arnmore was to be sadly dull and tiresome,’ said Dunallan, as he conducted Catharine by a short path through the woods to Mrs Oswald’s school.

‘Indeed I scarcely knew what to expect, Mr Dunallan. But all that is past. You have promised to assist me in forming myself into a fit inmate for this strangely interesting place. How shall I begin? I long to make the attempt—but here is Mrs Oswald come to meet us. Oh! that is too bad.’

‘Indeed I might as well have accompanied you,’ said Mrs Oswald. ‘Here I have been wandering in every direction in search of you, after having staid at my school an hour longer than usual; and nobody at the village, or anywhere else, had met you. Where can you have concealed yourself?’

Catharine attempted to apologise for her inattention; but Mrs Oswald interrupted her.

‘No apologies, my dear. I shall always excuse your forgetting me, if Edward is the cause.’ Mrs Oswald added aside to Catharine, who had turned away blushing, ‘and now, my dear, I have punished you more than I wished;’ and she then said aloud, ‘I am sure from both of your looks, time has passed away agreeably wherever you have been.’

‘Most agreeably, I allow on my part,’ said Dunallan, with an expression of mild but heartfelt pleasure.



‘I hope—indeed I can feel pretty certain,’ rejoined Mrs Oswald, ‘that if Heaven spares us all, we shall not soon tire of each other.’

‘If one of our party continues to be pleased with us,’ replied Dunallan,—I think——’

‘That depends on you, Mr Dunallan,’ interrupted Catharine, smiling. ‘You have undertaken to make me a rational and religious being, capable and worthy to become an inmate of your Arnmore. But who comes here? Do you expect visitors, Mr Dunallan?’

‘No, certainly,’ replied he, following her looks to a path by which three gentlemen were approaching.

‘Walderford!’ exclaimed he in a voice of joy, and was hastening to meet his friend, but turned again—‘Dear Catharine, I fear you may dislike this early call to oblige me by receiving my friends.’

‘No, Mr Dunallan, I shall meet your friends with the hope that they may become mine.’

‘A thousand thanks, my dearest Catharine,’ replied he with the most warmly grateful manner. He then hastened to meet his friends. The meeting seemed most joyful on both sides.

‘Ah!’ exclaimed Mrs Oswald, ‘there is friendship! friendship secured by the only certain everlasting bond. You perhaps know, Catharine, that Dunallan is called in the world “One of the Saints.” This Walderford is another; and has become so notwithstanding the ridicule and contemptuous treatment of a very clever but harsh father, and a host of worldly and dissipated relations. He is greatly beloved by Dunallan, who considers him as superior in talents as he is in worth.’

Mrs Oswald and Catharine walked slowly on; Dunallan and his friend soon seemed to be engaged in a conversation of the deepest interest to both. The other two gentlemen stopped at every step, apparently in admiration of the scenery which surrounded them. On their approaching nearer, Catharine perceived that the looks of all the party were directed towards her. This recalled her thoughts to her own situation, and the blush which glowed on her cheek, and softened her downcast eyes, when Dunallan introduced his friends, was perfectly



suited to the occasion, had she been united to him from the truest mutual affection.

Dunallan introduced the other gentlemen, Mr Gower and Mr Stanly; the former a little man, apparently between forty and fifty, with a countenance full of life and fire; the latter about the same age, but a large, mild, pleasing looking man, with little of any other character in his countenance. Mr Walderford, however, excited Catharine's interest most, though his manner rather disappointed her. When introduced, he fixed his eyes on her for a moment with an expression of not very flattering scrutiny; said a few hurried words of apology for intrusion; then turning to Mrs Oswald, renewed his acquaintance with her in a manner equally rapid and uncere-  
monious.

Dunallan offered his arm to Catharine. Mr Gower walked by her, and renewed his apologies for having visited his friend at a time when he must be considered an intruder. 'Our reason,' continued he, 'was our despair of seeing Mr Dunallan at all before he went abroad, unless we had that pleasure now; for business will prevent our being in London, I fear, before he departs thence, as it is much wished he should find it agreeable to set out on his important mission immediately. I hope,' continued Gower, 'that you, Mrs Dunallan, do not dread those northern climates?'

Catharine hesitated. 'I dread no climate,' replied she at last, scarcely knowing what she said.

'I am not so selfish as to wish Catharine to undergo the fatigues of such a journey with me,' said Dunallan. 'I have not even proposed it to her.'

Mr Gower looked at Catharine, and seemed to perceive that there was something he did not understand in Dunallan's reply, and her looks. Walderford began to speak on another subject, which proved to her that he knew exactly how matters stood. She walked on in silence. The happy feelings, and gay hopes for the future, which she had so lately experienced, had fled in a moment, and the idea of Dunallan's immediate departure, she knew not whither, filled her with the most uneasy apprehensions. She looked at him, to read, if possible, some ray of light or



comfort in his countenance, but was struck with its expression of dejection and disappointment.

Mrs Oswald and Walderford began immediately to converse together with much apparent interest, but both in a tone of voice so low, that Catharine only heard that Dunallan's plans formed the subject of their conversation. Dunallan himself continued silent, and seemed lost in deep and painful thought.

When they reached the house, Catharine would have withdrawn her arm, but Dunallan caught her hand: 'Will you give me your company for a few minutes longer, Catharine?'

'Certainly; but your friends——'

'Mrs Oswald will take charge of them,' replied he, again placing her hand within his arm, and leading her towards the library.

'Catharine,' said he on reaching it, 'I have delayed this conversation too long. I did not so soon expect I should be obliged to perform a promise I once made to some of my friends. I hoped that before I should be called on to go abroad, I either should have been—that we should have been in other circumstances, or that you could have felt—I wished to have tried at least—I hoped—I need not say what.' He hesitated—then proceeded, 'You now know, my dear Catharine, that I am called on to go abroad, in consequence of my own promise. Should you, however, disapprove of any plan I have formed, I conceive it my first duty at present to consult your wishes, if possible.'

'Oh no, Mr Dunallan, I cannot wish you to change any plan on my account. May I ask how long you will be absent?'

'That, dear Catharine, I cannot exactly tell. I undertook sometime ago a mission to St Petersburg, ostensibly to convey instructions of an important nature to our ambassador there; but the truth is, my mission regards a private negotiation, which relates more to the cause of religion, than to the politics of the day; and which, though countenanced, and indeed favoured by government, did not originate there. When I first thought of undertaking this mission, I did not expect that any new tie I should form could bind me to home. I acknowledge I had yielded too much to prejudice; but I must not speak on this subject. My first motive really was a desire to benefit my



fellow-creatures. If with this I mixed others less pure, I deserve to feel as I now do, for having agreed to leave a home, which, when I am about to banish myself from it, seems almost a paradise.'

*a* Catharine remained silent, a multitude of confused ideas followed what Dunallan had said; but his regret at leaving home was that most distinctly present. 'And why', thought she, 'not take as much as possible of home with him?' Yet she had not courage to propose herself accompanying him, though at that moment she could have done so, had not a certain doubtfulness as to whether he included her in his sources of happiness deterred her.

*ce* 'Mrs Oswald, I am sure, would willingly make a home for you in any part of the world, Mr Dunallan, and your dear children—the climate is good.'

'Mrs Oswald and the children!' interrupted Dunallan, who had eagerly watched Catharine's countenance, as she continued buried in thought; he looked reproachfully at her for a moment, then turned away, she thought proudly, and walked to a window, where he remained turned from her for a few moments. He however, soon recovered himself, and resumed his place, near her.

'I cannot wish Mrs Oswald to undertake such a journey,' said he in his usual gentle tone of voice, 'and the children must not leave this country. But now, Catharine, may I ask what would be your wishes?'

Catharine had felt hurt by his manner of replying to the proposal of Mrs Oswald's accompanying him. 'I never understand him,' thought she, dreading to make any answer. Dunallan, however, waited till she should.

'If,' said she at last, 'Mrs Oswald would remain here, and allow me to continue with her and the sweet children, I should prefer that to any other situation.'

'Mrs Oswald is your guest, Catharine; and I am sure will remain with you as long as you wish it.'

'And does this plan please you, Mr Dunallan?' asked Catharine, timidly.

'Yes,' replied he, languidly.



‘Not quite, I think. Tell me any other. I only wish to please you.’

‘And this pleases me most, dear Catharine, since——’ he stopt.

‘Since what?’

‘Nothing.’

‘Are you now keeping your promise to be quite plain with me, Mr Dunallan?’ asked Catharine rather reproachfully.

‘Yes, dearest Catharine, I have been too plain; but I see too well how it is. I must leave you, and in that event, your wishes are exactly mine; and may the God of heaven be your guide, support, and happiness.’ He then hastened from her, and Catharine, surprised and moved, retired to her own apartment to think on what had passed. She had never before seen Dunallan so much agitated; and she found it was infectious. ‘What can he mean,’ said she to herself, ‘is it possible that parting from an aunt and two children, can move such a man as Dunallan?’ She dared scarcely admit the idea that separation from herself could have caused emotions so painful. Indeed she could not believe it, for she had been accustomed to the devoted attentions of others, and gentle, considerate, and ever attentive as he was, Dunallan had never till the last half hour betrayed one emotion that she could have construed into what she considered that kind of regard. Yet why such emotion? Why, if he wished it indeed, did he not ask her to accompany him? Surely he could not expect her to offer—uninvited. Impossible. In vain she attempted to account for his extreme agitation. She could not, however, altogether banish the idea that she herself was the cause. At one moment her gratitude to him, and her increasing admiration for his character, joined to this softening thought, led her to long for an opportunity of proving to him how much she valued that character, and that regard; but the next, she shrunk from the idea of any explanation that might lead to her leaving her country, her father, Elizabeth, every person, every thing, she had ever known or loved, to accompany alone that being whom she had, till within the last few days, regarded with dread and aversion. Again, the idea of Dunallan’s kindness would return; his gentleness, the enthusi-



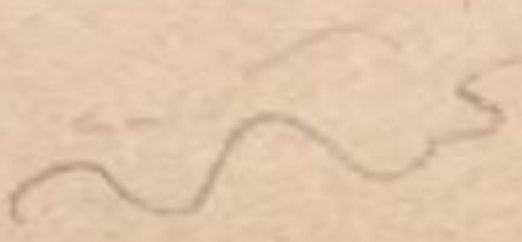
astic affection he inspired in those around him, his solitary feelings amongst strangers in a strange land. It was from reflections of the last kind that she was again called to meet Dunallan. His manner, however, soon chased them away. All appearance of unusual tenderness and emotion was gone. He was even less gentle than usual. He seemed again that Dunallan whom she had so long regarded with dread. His manner, however, soon became as gentle as usual, and his countenance, though still thoughtful, resumed those mild and feeling expressions which had been gaining on Catharine's affections every moment since she had left her father's roof; and when he entered into conversation with his friends, she soon forgot all that was past or future while listening to him. The subjects of conversation were not new to her, but many of the opinions expressed by Dunallan and his friends were entirely so. They all seemed anxious to engage her to join in what passed, and soon succeeded. She began with great animation to defend those opinions she had been accustomed to consider just, but which she now heard regarded as erroneous. Her looks and manner had more effect, perhaps, than her arguments; but Mr Gower in vain attempted to follow her half playful, half serious, sometimes fanciful, but always ingenious and lively defence of her own sentiments. He was lost in the maze, though quite unconvinced, and she turned from him to Mr Walderford, declaring she had converted one opponent, and gaily demanding whether he too did not find her arguments quite unanswerable?

He smiled, and asked, 'on what subject?'

'On every subject we have conversed upon,' replied she; 'but particularly respecting candour, and charitable opinion of others.'

'You say, I believe, Madam,' replied he, 'that charity consists in—may I ask you to repeat what? I may perhaps do injustice to your definition.'

'Why, I think it consists in—in——. I do not remember that I said what it consisted in. I only said I thought it very uncharitable to suppose people devoid of religious principle, when we were ignorant of their opinions on the subject—a subject which is with many, and I think ought to be with all, confined to their own hearts.'





‘How is that possible, Madam?’ asked Walderford, fixing his mild but inquiring eyes on Catharine.

‘Why not?’ replied she. ‘I think——’ She hesitated, Walderford looked so serious, though very mild. *tho*

‘Do we not imply, when we talk of a principle,’ continued he, in a gentle tone of voice, ‘something which is the source or motive of action; and is it possible that our actions or opinions will not betray it, if any strong principle has possession of our minds and hearts? We have a simple but infallible rule to judge by in this case,’ added he, smiling,—‘when we see a bush produce nothing but thorns, we are not uncharitable in concluding that it cannot be a vine.’

‘But the person of whom we spoke is one of the most inoffensive of human beings,’ said Catharine; ‘your simile of thorns applies very ill to him.’ *Thorns*

‘I confess it does; but still, let me ask, what good to himself, or to any living creature, has his life produced? He is good-tempered, I allow, and, to his fox-hunting friends, very agreeable, perhaps; but what account, were he called on for it, could he give of what he has done with his immense fortune, and naturally not deficient understanding?’

‘What account could any of us give,’ replied Catharine, ‘but that we have put our fortunes to no bad use that we are conscious of.’ *u*

‘Ah, Catharine,’ said Dunallan, ‘you have no chance of success in the argument, if you bring forward such a plea as that.’

‘Will you assist me?’ asked she, smiling sweetly.

‘I fear I cannot. I should be found to join your opponent.’

‘Ah, then, I shall take refuge in flight,’ said she, ‘if Mrs Oswald will come with me.’

Mrs Oswald rose immediately, and though Dunallan’s looks seemed to entreat their stay, retired with her young friend.

‘And now, my dear Madam,’ said Catharine, when they had reached the drawing-room, ‘tell me what Mr Dunallan finds so amiable in this Mr Walderford? for I think I never saw any young man with such grave and severe manners.’

‘Are they more so than you found Dunallan’s at first, my dear?’



‘Why, perhaps not; but what is this?’ exclaimed she, observing a harp placed at the other end of the room, ‘my harp! impossible! it could not have reached me. No, it is not mine.’

‘It is one Edward ordered for you, my dear; it ought to have been here sooner.’

Catharine touched the strings, and sighed deeply.

‘Why that sigh, Catharine?’

‘Because this attention of Mr Dunallan’s reminds me of its cause,’ replied she; ‘he wishes kindly that I may be amused in his absence; but this will assist me to express the only feelings I shall experience,’ added she, beginning to play a melancholy air, while the tears stood in her eyes.

Mrs Oswald smiled and said, ‘I cannot wish you to feel otherwise, dear Catharine.’

Catharine blushed and left the harp, saying, ‘Mr Dunallan seemed to think the argument I used before we left the dining-room a very bad one, my dear Mrs Oswald; pray what does he think we ought to do with our fortunes—give them all to the poor?’

‘No, my love, he does not do that himself; and many people who are otherwise very worthless, have so much humanity of disposition, that they cannot witness suffering without relieving it, if it is in their power. What Edward considers right is this—that each individual should attempt to form an idea of what good it is within his power to do in the situation in which he is placed, with the fortune, or influence, or mental powers, or advantages of any kind, with which Heaven has intrusted him: to form his plan of life after this examination, and to improve and pursue it steadily if possible, while he remains in this world; and this he thinks the duty of every rational being, for all have something in their power.’

‘All!’ repeated Catharine.

‘Yes, my love, all. There is scarcely any one perhaps with fewer means of being useful than myself; yet, I hope, I am not entirely a cumberer of the ground. There are some who are more ignorant than I am of the one thing which is of equal importance to us all,—I can instruct them. There are others in affliction,—to them I can point out the means by which I ob-



tained consolation. God has given me those two sweet children, and while they are entrusted to me, I still have a motive for wishing to live; and should He deprive me of every other means of attempting to prove my love to Him, may I,' added she, raising her eyes to heaven, with an expression of deep and pious emotion, 'may I be enabled to declare that his support to my soul is sufficient, and thus recommend his service with my last breath.'

'You have another means of being useful in your power which you have not named, my dear Mrs Oswald,' said Catharine, softening into tears,—'be a guide to me. Mr Dunallan undertook the task, but he has too many concerns of greater moment—he will soon forget such a promise—yet every word you say convinces me more and more how little I know of what is truly right—how much I require a guide in every thing.'

'Ah, my love, you must not trust to earthly guides,' replied Mrs Oswald,—'you must seek a guide far superior to Dunallan. As for me, my dearest Catharine, my friendship, my advice, my opinions on every subject, my earnest prayers are yours whenever you desire them; and my warm affection you already possess. But, my love, you utterly mistake Dunallan's character, if you suppose any affairs in which he may be engaged, however important, will lead him to neglect those nearly connected with him, and most particularly yourself, now his nearest of all relations. Write to him, my dear Catharine, since you must separate. Get acquainted with him in this way. You will find him study with attention, and reply in a manner that will perhaps surprise you, to the very least important parts of your letters; and also endeavour to make his agreeable to you, however deeply he may be engaged in the most important affairs. The happiness, the ultimate happiness of the human race, is the vast object of his desires. In this he is a citizen of the world; every immortal being is of equal importance in his opinion, and equally worthy of his limited efforts to promote his best interests; but the feelings of a being who would sacrifice almost every thing to preserve the happiness of the meanest of his immortal fellow-men,—the feelings of such a heart, to those known and loved by him, are of a nature inexpressibly tender. Again, my love, let



me advise you to correspond frequently with Edward. I know he will wish it, and I am sure the consequence will be, your feeling for him that affection which will make his return the first wish of your heart.'

'And why should I wish to feel such an affection for him?' asked Catharine, sadly.

'I shall tell you why, from experience, my love; because feeling a tender affection for an estimable object is the sweetest, the happiest of all earthly feelings. Ah, Catharine! how superior is that affection excited by great and good qualities, to that into which we are won, we know not how, by pleasing manners, or an agreeable exterior, while we are ignorant of the real character. How happy, how easy is that wife, who knows that on every subject her husband's principles are as strictly pure as her own, compared to her who loves a being whose past life she must avoid inquiring about; whose principles are guided by fashion, and whose affection and fidelity to her has no other security than her powers of pleasing, or the absence of temptation! And Oh! how different must their feelings be,' added Mrs Oswald, with deep emotion, 'when the hour, perhaps the unexpected hour, arrives of their last separation! To part from him whose peace has long been made with heaven; whom we have regarded with veneration, while we witnessed his increasing nearness to perfection; whose "path" we have seen "shine more and more unto the perfect day." To part with such a one, even with the firmest conviction that he has entered into that perfect day, is severe, Oh, how severe! but to see one whom we love more than our own lives, called to another state of being—ignorant—unprepared. To look back for comfort, and to recollect mis-spent time—misapplied talents—contempt of the Being before whom he is on the eve of appearing. The past is too dreadful—we turn to the future—all is darkness: or, if there is a gleam of hope, it must arise from a change of views and feelings in the perhaps almost insensible—or suffering—or feverish—or delirious object of our agonized affections.'

'Dreadful!' exclaimed Catharine, shuddering.

'Dreadful! indeed,' replied Mrs Oswald. 'Yours, my dear Catharine, will, I trust, be a very different lot, however clouded



the early part of your married life may be ; but forgive me for speaking on this subject ; I have been led into it unawares.'

Catharine made no reply, but, after a few moments of thoughtful silence, asked Mrs Oswald to walk out with her. 'Mr Dunallan,' said she, 'is too kindly solicitous about me : he seems to think he ought to attend to me even in preference to his friends. I must not be ungrateful. Let us go out, and desire the servants to say that the fineness of the evening tempted us, but that we shall return in an hour or two.'

Mrs Oswald agreed to Catharine's proposal, but on reaching the hall, they met the gentlemen on their way to join them in the drawing-room.

'Going to walk again ! my dear aunt,' said Dunallan, approaching Catharine, and offering his arm. 'I hope you will allow us to accompany you.'

'Oh no,' said Catharine, blushing and passing him, 'we wish to——,' she stopped, not knowing what to say.

'I do not mean to intrude,' replied Dunallan, in a voice which made Catharine turn back. He seemed really hurt.

'Oh,' said Mrs Oswald, 'I must tell you our secret. Catharine supposes that you gentlemen must wish for some private conversation, and that you would feel more at liberty if we ladies disposed of ourselves, so as to rid you of the trouble of attending to us.'

Dunallan turned to Catharine. Her looks confirmed the truth of what Mrs Oswald had said. His countenance softened. 'I wish for no conversation, Catharine, to which your presence would not give its greatest interest.'

'We all have cause to entreat your presence, Madam,' said Mr Gower, laughing. 'Dunallan's thoughts have not been one moment with us since you left the room.'

Dunallan reddened excessively, and attempted, but with embarrassment, to change the subject. Mr Gower, however, seemed to enjoy his confusion, and continued to rally him without mercy.

'I know why you do not marry, Gower,' said Walderford at last.

'Do you, Walderford ? That is more than I do myself.'



‘It is because you *feel* that you would be most remarkably ridiculous as a new-married man.’

Mr Gower laughed. ‘That may be one reason——’

‘Do not seek for more reasons,’ interrupted Mrs Oswald. ‘You gentlemen who glory in your liberty, are always most completely governed when you do marry.’

Mr Gower himself now became the object of raillery: but the conversation soon assumed a more serious tone. Dunallan and his friends talked without reserve. They explained to Mrs Oswald and Catharine the nature of the affair which induced Dunallan to go abroad; what had given rise to it; and what the views of government, and those benevolent men were, at whose request he had undertaken the mission. Catharine perceived, by what his friends said in conversation, that Dunallan was very highly esteemed by those distinguished individuals. He himself seemed to feel the most enthusiastic and lively interest in the success of his undertaking. Some difficulties were started by Mr Gower. These Dunallan met with good-natured raillery. Mr Walderford’s objections were more connected with his feelings of anxiety for the success and reputation of his friend, in an undertaking difficult in itself, and exposed to misconstruction. These objections Dunallan endeavoured to do away, by the calmest and most convincing arguments, while his manner to his friend expressed the most earnest anxiety to divest him of every cause of uneasiness.

‘You seem to wish to dissuade Mr Dunallan from undertaking this benevolent mission, Mr Walderford,’ said Catharine.

‘I confess I do,’ replied he, ‘because there is another situation we wish him to accept of, which would keep him with us, and in which I am certain he would distinguish himself; but distinction has no charms for him.’

‘Distinction no charms!’ repeated Catharine. ‘Impossible! I shall never understand you, Mr Dunallan. What *do* you value?’

Dunallan smiled, and was going to reply; but Mrs Oswald answered for him.

‘He values that distinction, my dear Catharine,’ said she, ‘which will one day be bestowed by his Master in heaven, in



those few simple but precious words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

'But, my dear Madam,' said Catharine somewhat indignantly, 'do you really think that obtaining distinction honourably in this world, would make him less worthy of that you mention?'

'If distinction was his only aim, my dear, or if preferred to usefulness without it, I certainly think it would.'

Catharine was silent for a few moments, then said, half reproachfully, to Mrs Oswald; 'and you, Madam, wish Mr Dunallan to leave us.'

'My aunt is my best and kindest friend on this occasion, my dear Catharine,' said Dunallan in reply. 'She assists me to keep the plain path of duty, instead of attempting to lure me from it.'

As the evening passed away, Catharine became every moment more sad. Dunallan, too, attempted in vain to join cheerfully in the conversation. He became absent and thoughtful, and only seemed to hear when Catharine spoke. When she was silent, he continued to look at her, apparently unconsciously, with an expression of the deepest, though most melancholy interest.

Catharine's heart filled when she bade him good night, and she turned away to conceal the tears which she could not restrain.

She then hurried to her own apartment, and dismissing Martin, indulged her tears without restraint. She continued half the night awake, in deep and painful thought. In vain she attempted to reconcile Dunallan's undisguised tenderness, and evident unwillingness to leave her, with his never, by even the slightest hint, expressing a wish that she should accompany him. At last the thought struck her, that pity for her singular and unhappy situation, of which he had been one cause, had excited in Dunallan's generous and feeling nature those strong emotions she had witnessed. She placed herself in idea in the same circumstances, and thought his feelings were perfectly natural; yet the idea was mortifying; and she attempted to banish it, and to believe, what she now most fervently wished, that their separation was as painful to him as she was forced to acknowledge to her own heart, it now was to her.



## CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER a few hours of unrefreshing sleep, Catharine rose next morning with her heart still oppressed by the thoughts of the night before. When she began to dress, and saw her pale and exhausted looks, she determined not to betray her feelings, by appearing at prayers, or at breakfast ; but soon recollecting that an indisposition so serious as to confine her to her apartment might be ascribed to the same cause, she waited till the bell for prayers had been finished for a few minutes, then entered the library, in the hope that when all were assembled, she might hurry to her seat unobserved. In this, however, she was disappointed. Dunallan had waited for her ; and every eye was turned to her when she entered the room. She apologised with much confusion for her lateness, and entreated Dunallan to proceed.

‘First let me chide you for joining us at all this morning, my dearest Catharine,’ said Mrs Oswald ; ‘you seem really unwell, my dear child,’ added she, looking at Catharine with much concern.

‘Oh ! not at all, my dear Mrs Oswald, only a little headach, which always makes me look thus.’

Catharine blushed as she told her falsehood ; and, meeting Dunallan’s eyes, which were anxiously fixed upon her, she again blushed still more deeply.

Dunallan began to read, but Catharine could not listen even to him. Her thoughts immediately returned to the painful idea, that Dunallan’s kindness and tender interest were excited by compassion for her, and she determined that, from that moment, he should have no cause to suppose she was unhappy. At breakfast, she affected an indifference, and even gaiety of manner, which ill expressed the feelings of her heart. But Catharine could not long act a part : she soon sunk into silence, and that thoughtful sadness which the feelings of the moment produced. Dunallan, instead of being deceived by her attempts to appear more gay, was even more tenderly attentive, and seemed more sad than the evening before ; and Catharine felt relieved when,



after breakfast, he received some letters which drew his attention from her. These letters, however, soon seemed to excite a very painful interest. After musing for some time over their apparently disagreeable contents, Dunallan requested his friends to accompany him for a short time to the library.

‘You have received bad news, Edward!’ exclaimed Mrs Oswald in a hurried and anxious tone of voice.

‘No, my dear aunt.’ He then held the letters to Catharine. ‘If you can be at the trouble to read these, my dear Catharine, they will show my aunt that I have no cause of uneasiness, but that of being obliged to leave home sooner than I expected.’

He then left the room with his friends. Catharine’s hand trembled so violently, she could not unfold the letter she wished to read. Mrs Oswald took it, and read aloud its contents. They were merely an earnest desire expressed by those gentlemen who managed the affair in which Mr Dunallan was about to be engaged, that he would join them in London as soon as it was possible, a very favourable opportunity having offered for his going to his destination.

Mrs Oswald was a good deal affected, and struggled in vain to suppress her tears. Catharine did not weep; she was overpowered. She knew before that he was to leave her soon; but this sudden call for his departure destroyed at once every secret hope of an explanation, or of she knew not what, which she had unconsciously cherished. Mrs Oswald soon recovered her composure, and looking at Catharine’s pale and expressive countenance with surprise, said, ‘My dear girl, Edward will not go if you express the slightest wish that he should remain.’

‘Not for the universe would I express such a wish,’ replied Catharine; ‘I have no such wish, for he evidently desires to go;’ and she burst into tears.

‘My dearest Catharine,’ said Mrs Oswald in a solemn but soothing tone of voice, ‘do not deceive me. You know you promised to be guided by my advice. Trust me, my love; do not let pride or false delicacy injure the happiness of both. Dunallan has assured me, that should you wish him to remain, he would consider it his duty to do so, unless you should accompany him, my dear Catharine, which, I believe, would be his wish.’



‘Oh! no, my dear Mrs Oswald, that is not his wish. We have conversed on the subject. He never proposed my going. Dearest Mrs Oswald, I entreat you never mention the subject to him. I would sooner die than that he should imagine that——. Promise me, dearest Mrs Oswald, that you will never utter a word to him on the subject.’

Mrs Oswald hesitated : an approaching step terrified Catharine.

‘Will you not promise, Mrs Oswald?’ exclaimed she in an agony of apprehension.

‘I promise, my love ; compose yourself.’

Catharine attempted to do so. The step passed, but the next was Dunallan’s. He appeared so sad, that Catharine’s eyes again filled as he approached. He did not look at her, however, but said in a low voice to Mrs Oswald——

‘I think I must go to-day—I ought——’

‘To-day!’ exclaimed Catharine, ‘so soon!’ her voice changed, and she stopped.

Mrs Oswald asked if he was quite prepared to go so suddenly.

‘No, not quite, certainly, in any way,’ replied he with emotion ; ‘but delay, I believe, will not do.’

‘Not even till to-morrow?’ said Catharine.

‘Certainly,’ replied Dunallan, ‘I may delay till to-morrow, since you propose it.’

‘Not for me,’ replied she quickly.

‘A sister might wish this little delay, Catharine,’ said he, reproachfully ; ‘fear not, I shall not misunderstand your feelings.’

Catharine felt relieved. ‘Let it be to-morrow, then,’ said she, sweetly, and holding out her hand to him.

He only held it for a moment, then let it go. He seemed displeased ; but after a few moments turned again to Catharine, and requested permission to write to her.

‘I wished to propose this,’ replied she. He looked much pleased. ‘Mrs Oswald,’ added Catharine, looking round for her, but she had slipped away. Catharine became confused, and forgot what she was going to say. Dunallan looked at her for a moment, then said,



‘What did Mrs Oswald say to you, my dear Catharine, about my writing to you?’

Catharine instantly recollected herself, ‘She said I should have great pleasure in receiving letters——’

‘So it was my aunt who excited your wish to hear from me?’ interrupted Dunallan.

‘Not entirely; but I should certainly not have proposed it, had she not told me that you had time for everything.’

‘Time, Catharine! time to write to you! I shall esteem it a pleasure, a sweet recreation, to which I shall look forward with impatience. You will answer my letters, at least some of them?’

‘Will you tire of an answer to each?’ asked Catharine, scarcely knowing what he meant.

‘Tire! Oh, never! but I shall write very frequently; for I am so sociable and communicative, that I feel but half pleased, or half any thing, till I have imparted my feelings to those I wish to love me. If I could be so happy as to prevail on you to write thus to me, I should feel absence greatly sweetened indeed.’

Catharine smiled. ‘My answers will entirely depend on your letters,’ replied she.

‘Then you will be as frank as I shall be. Oh! Catharine, keep your promise, and then I shall, perhaps, have cause to rejoice in this painful separation.’

Dunallan then begged leave to arrange with Catharine those affairs which it was necessary she should manage in his absence; and these he made so perfectly easy, that, to her own surprise, she understood all he wished. She, however, proposed that Mrs Oswald should act for him in his absence; but Dunallan gently urged the propriety of her beginning to attend to such matters, and added, ‘I shall write my opinion on this subject, my dear Catharine; we must not now lose our few precious moments.’

Catharine only needed to know what Dunallan wished, to make anything interesting to her; even money matters, to which he seemed to attach a responsibility, in a quarter where she had never before considered herself accountable.

‘We are only stewards of our large fortunes, my dear Catharine,’ said he. ‘We ought to know, not only that it is not



improperly squandered away, but ought to study with deep attention how it may be most usefully employed, and follow steadily those objects which our calmer reflections point out as most desirable to be obtained by these gifts of Providence.'

Catharine promised to do all he wished; and Dunallan, on his part, promised to write his opinion to her on every subject on which she wished to know it. After this arrangement, Dunallan presented some papers to her: 'These, my dear Catharine, are my plans and wishes about my village; the names of the villagers, and many other things which I leave with you to arrange and follow out as you think best.'

'Oh! I am incapable of this!' exclaimed Catharine; 'Mrs Oswald——'

'Ask Mrs Oswald's advice; but unless you fear the trouble, believe me, dear Catharine, such occupations will add to your happiness. Will you make the trial? and if you do find the trouble too great, Mrs Oswald will, I know, relieve you.'

'And you will despise me,' said Catharine. 'Oh, do not leave such important matters in my care.'

'Will you not make the attempt? I must despise myself, not you, dear Catharine, if I find that I so little know what is agreeable occupation.'

'If you will promise then not to despise me, if I fail, I will attempt to do all you wish.'

Dunallan had loaded Catharine with occupations before they separated, but she felt gratified to be thus trusted. The hope of hearing frequently from her seemed to have greatly reconciled Dunallan to his immediate departure, and Catharine, too, felt her heart lighter when she looked forward to this means of intercourse.

It was late before Dunallan had finished imparting his plans and wishes. After dinner he proposed spending the evening in a beautiful retreat near the castle, which he still called, 'My Mother's Walk.' Every one assented with pleasure to this proposal.

The evening was delightful, and this favourite walk of Dunallan's was so situated as to receive all the charms it gave. The lake, unruffled, and reflecting on its bosom, now glowing in



the soft evening light, the rocks and wooded hills, which formed its boundary. The more distant mountains, reddened by the bright rays, lay before them—while the castle, rising from its picturesque cliffs, also gilded by the glowing light, seemed to tower from the wooded dell which separated it from Dunallan's walk.

The scene seemed to suit the feelings of all the party. Catharine felt it calm her spirits, or rather mingle with the sadness she could not overcome, those undefinable emotions which, though full of melancholy, are still exquisitely pleasurable. All remained silent when this scene first opened on their view. Dunallan broke the silence.

‘Do you remember such an evening as this at Dunallan Castle, Catharine?’ asked he, ‘when I accompanied you to *your favourite walk*?’

‘I do,’ replied she, ‘and this scene greatly resembles that which I so much loved at Dunallan Castle.’

Mr Gower and Mr Stanly soon left the party and walked to some distance, wholly occupied with the striking and magnificent views which presented themselves at every step. Walderford remained near his friend. After a few turns Dunallan led Catharine to a seat which commanded the most extensive and magnificent part of the view—and placed himself between her and his friend.

‘Do you recollect our conversation on that evening you mentioned, Mr Dunallan?’ asked Catharine.

‘I do, perfectly.’

‘Mr Dunallan on that evening,’ continued Catharine, addressing Mrs Oswald, ‘blamed me for ascribing to nature—to an undefined idea, the glory which is due to the Author of all those beauties which surround us.’

‘I agree with my nephew, my dear, in thinking we are wrong when we banish the Creator of our existence from our thoughts, at the very moment we are most sincerely admiring His works. I have seen many turn coldly away, when that beauty they admired as the work of nature, was piously ascribed to its real Author. There are times, however, when we all wish to derive comfort from the idea of His presence—at least with those we

*pious from*



love,' added Mrs Oswald, looking at Dunallan. 'We all wish to feel assured that He who so profusely throws around us all those beauties and blessings, is also the tender guardian and protector of our absent friends.'

'True,' said Walderford; 'I cannot help at times, however, feeling indignant, when I hear people who never seem to have any religious feelings, except when some such painful event as separation from friends takes place, then appropriate to themselves all the comforts which are surely intended exclusively for those who are as much influenced by religion, when surrounded by blessings, as they are when they are in danger of being separated from those blessings.'

'But they are sincere at those sad moments,' said Catharine, 'and every pious feeling will surely be accepted and rewarded as far as it is sincere.'

'I should be sorry to despise the slightest emotion of piety,' replied Walderford, 'but, my dear madam, would such feelings be considered of any value in human intercourse? Would you esteem that to be real affection in a dependant, which led him to apply to you for assistance in matters where you alone could help him, and at all other times allowed him to neglect or despise your service, and positively disobey your orders?'

'Certainly not; but we cannot judge of the Divine Being by such comparisons—we cannot ascribe to Him human feelings, and human sentiments, such as we experience towards those who treat us ill.'

'I allow we cannot altogether—yet we must conceive of Him whom we cannot comprehend, from what He has revealed of himself, and from what He demands of us; and you know, my dear madam, He requires our hearts, which must surely mean the supreme place in our affections.'

'But do you understand that literally of our human affections—our common feelings?' asked Catharine, smiling.

'I do, my dearest madam. I am not conscious of possessing two hearts—two sets of affections—one for common use; and another, sacred, and only to be called forth in sorrows and difficulties; to approach a forgotten, and almost unknown God.'

Catharine looked around her.



‘I believe we all understand it so, my dear Catharine,’ said Dunallan.

‘Why then, I suppose we all should be of the same opinion,’ said she, ‘if we explained ourselves; for I should think the whole human race lost, at least with very few exceptions,’ added she, recollecting herself for a moment, ‘were we to understand it literally. But to be sure I cannot judge of the hearts of others,’ she rejoined, ‘I ought not.’

‘Judge by your own heart, my dear Catharine,’ said Dunallan.

‘By my own heart! then I must condemn myself; I cannot stand this test literally. Am I to believe that any human being can, Mr Dunallan?’

‘Yes, I believe many. I do not mean to say, dear Catharine, that any human being lives, without often—daily, hourly—acting, or feeling, or thinking wrong—contrary to the will of the Supreme Being, which is beyond the conception of our weak and corrupt natures pure and holy; but this perversion of heart, this weakness, this inability to obey the laws of his Creator in all their purity, is the greatest of all griefs to a truly religious being. You know, my dear Catharine, we may be led by our evil passions and tempers to offend those whom we most dearly love on earth; we are then miserable till we are forgiven and reconciled; so are they who supremely love their Master in heaven. They may be tempted to do things displeasing to Him, but such deviations are followed by a wretchedness so insupportable, that they cannot but feel that their love for Him and His service is superior to all other attachments whatever.’

Catharine remained silent and thoughtful for some moments, then said, ‘Is that devotion of heart to the Supreme Being, the peculiarity which distinguishes those who, you told me, were called “saints,” Mrs Oswald?’

‘It is, my love; and I pray Heaven you may soon experience it so powerfully, so delightfully, as to disregard its peculiarity.’

‘We must not, however, deceive Catharine, my dear aunt,’ said Dunallan. ‘The world does not give those whom they in ridicule call “saints,” credit for really feeling this devotion. They are accused of affecting only to feel it. In the world, a “saint” and a hypocrite are synonymous terms.’



Catharine recollected the character she had heard ascribed to Dunallan himself, and felt the truth of what he said.

‘That opinion, however,’ said Mrs Oswald, ‘has been rather shaken by the allowed excellence of character of some of the “saints.”’

‘Yes,’ replied Dunallan, ‘but, notwithstanding their unreserved avowal of the principles which influence them, these men are said to be naturally so well disposed, and so sensible and clever, that they are distinguished members of society in spite of the strange opinions they have adopted on religious subjects.’

‘I have often heard these very sentiments expressed regarding them,’ said Catharine; ‘and I confess I felt great contempt for the religious part of their character.’

‘Have you any curiosity to know more about that peculiarity now, my dearest Catharine?’ asked Dunallan.

‘The very greatest curiosity. I wish to know how they can so command their natural feelings, as really, in the bustle of active life, to be guided by that devotion of heart which you have described.’

*enigma  
wunder*  
‘I shall have great pleasure in attempting to explain the enigma to you, dearest Catharine,’ said Dunallan, ‘and those books you have promised to read will assist me. You see I wish you to *become a “saint.”* You will find, however, by the books I have selected, that I am desirous of your complete conviction. You will then see both sides of the many arguments which have been employed on that most important subject, whether an absolute unreserved devotion of every power of the mind, and every feeling of the heart, and every action of the life, to the service of our Creator, is required by the scriptures; or whether the vague notions which have so little influence on the lives of the generality of those who profess, and suppose themselves to be Christians, can be all that is required. I have marked those passages which I think most forcible.’

Catharine acknowledged her obligations to Dunallan: ‘How much trouble you have taken,’ said she, ‘to lead me right in your absence. I shall have no excuse if I err.’

Dunallan smiled rather sadly, ‘I do feel most anxious, Catharine, for your happiness. You know my opinion is, that we



cannot be happy unless we are in the right path, as well in affections as in actions.'

The other gentlemen now joined the party, and the conversation became more general. Dunallan attempted to be cheerful, but did not entirely succeed; and as the evening advanced, the sadness of the whole party increased, and the conversation partook of the same feelings. The sun soon set unobserved, from the deep interest of these last moments of intercourse. Catharine, however, felt the increasing darkness a relief, and indulged the tears she had found difficulty in restraining, while Dunallan had been addressing her in a voice of such tender and kind solicitude, that every word had reached her inmost heart. A servant approached, to remind Dunallan that it was the hour for prayers.

'Why should we leave this magnificent place of worship?' exclaimed Walderford. 'That bright rising moon will light us home. The air is balm: the ladies cannot suffer.'

'Let us remain here, then,' said Dunallan; 'you, Catharine, have no objection?'

'Oh, certainly not,' replied she.

'You may all join us here,' said Dunallan to the servant. 'You, my dear aunt, must assist us with your memory,' continued he.

Mrs Oswald assented; and when after a time, the servants gathered together in a group at a little distance, she said, 'I shall repeat a hymn, and all who know it will join when we sing.' She then repeated some verses, descriptive of the feelings of parting friends, beautifully contrasted with the peace and security of that state where there shall be no more parting. All the party, excepting Catharine and most of the servants, seemed to know the hymn, and joined in singing. Catharine listened, as if to an illusion, so unlike was all she heard and witnessed to any scene at which she had ever before been present, yet so completely suited to the exalted state of her feelings. An echo, too, from the cliffs sweetly joined, as if a spirit had been near, and, when the hymn was closed, prolonged the sacred song in notes more aerial. Dunallan paused, till from cliff to cliff the faint sounds died away. He then repeated, in an impressive



and solemn tone of voice, several passages of scripture calculated to lead the heart to its Creator, as the only source from which it can find happiness to satisfy its vast desires; and then rising, and uncovering his head, he implored the Divine blessing, and light, and protection, and peace, for all around him, so earnestly and so particularly, that his prayer seemed a farewell to each, of the most tender and affectionate nature. When he had finished, he offered his arm to Catharine. The party then proceeded slowly and silently towards the house.

*dull every way*  
‘And this is methodism!’ thought Catharine, as they walked. ‘This is that dull, gloomy, degrading superstition and hypocrisy, which I have so long joined in regarding with scorn and contempt.’ A feeling of apprehension mingled with her other emotions. ‘How solemn,’ thought she, ‘is this continual recollection of God. Surely this must be true religion; and if it is, what I have hitherto regarded as such cannot be so. But how few are thus ever mindful of the presence of God! It cannot be necessary, or who is safe? Those few particular people only at whom all the rest of the world laugh? Impossible! I must not be led into this narrow bigotry.’ But Catharine could not reason away either her veneration for that religion which so constantly and so powerfully influenced those with whom she now was, or her misgivings regarding her own.

It was late before the party returned to the house; and as the travellers were to set off early next morning, Mrs Oswald very soon proposed retiring. Dunallan followed her and Catharine out of the room.

‘My dearest aunt, I shall not see you in the morning—we go too early.’

Mrs Oswald embraced him in silence. She attempted to bless him, but the words died on her lips, and she hurried away.

Catharine held out her hand to him. ‘You will write very soon?’

‘How soon, dearest Catharine?’

‘Perhaps to-morrow, when you stop for the night, if it will not plague you.’

‘Yes, ah yes, I shall write to-morrow; and you will write frequently to me?’



‘I will, indeed.’

Dunallan’s farewell completely overcame Catharine ; it was so tender, yet so solemn. She disengaged herself from him, and hastening to her own apartment, she burst into a passion of tears. ‘And this is the same Dunallan,’ thought she, ‘whom only a week ago I dreaded as the greatest enemy to my peace.’ She continued to weep, regardless of the presence of Martin, till, worn out and miserable, she at last consented to go to bed—but not to sleep.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

ALL the next day Catharine felt listless and miserable. She sought refuge in solitude from Mrs Oswald’s composure, and, as she thought, unfeeling activity ; for that good lady occupied herself in all her usual employments.

Catharine thought over the last six strange weeks, and blamed herself severely during the retrospect. Why had she suffered the conviction of Dunallan’s worth, which forced itself upon her almost immediately on his arrival at Dunallan Castle, to make no impression ? Why had she shut her eyes to the noble sincerity and mild dignity of his manners, and her ears to the good sense, superior talent, and constantly strict principle which had marked his conversation ? Why had she suffered prejudice, and prejudice excited by those she knew were his enemies, to blind her to all his good, amiable, admirable qualities, and blind her also to her own happiness, to secure which she should have sought for all that was amiable in the being to whom she was to look for the peace of her future life ? ‘And now he is gone,’ thought she, ‘when I had just begun to feel that I could delight in looking to his approbation, to his affection, as the source of all my happiness.’ She recollected him during his residence at Dunallan Castle ; his polite and manly gentleness to herself on his first arrival there, when she knew he had revolted at the idea of being united to her ; his perfect command of temper, and superiority in argument, and in every thing,



to the arrogant, but clever and ingenious St Clair; his unmoved politeness, and even kindness of manner, (when they would receive it), to all around him, while they were watching every opportunity to disagree with him, or to speak at, or turn into ridicule, what he was known to respect and value. Catharine blushed with shame and self-reproach, when she recollected the species of persecution to which Dunallan had been subjected, and the patience with which he had borne it. Even his coldness to her father, which had seemed to increase rather than diminish, she could not help feeling raised him in her opinion. 'And he is gone,' thought she, 'and perhaps for years, to engage in a thousand important affairs, which he undertook to avoid the unhappy being who was to be forced upon him as his wife; and his heart is now engaged in those affairs, and he will soon forget the last disagreeable six weeks, or remember them only as a dream—an unpleasant dream! And when the impression of pity for me has worn off, he will forget me too, or only think of me as a troublesome charge; and, when he sees some amiable woman, whose mind is elevated, and whose heart is devoted to all that is good, like his own, he will then remember me as the insuperable, and, if he could hate, hateful bar to his happiness.'

Catharine could scarcely endure her own feelings, which increased in bitterness the longer she indulged them. She joined Mrs Oswald at dinner, and felt in some degree reconciled to her, on observing that she betrayed some emotion at seeing Dunallan's place at table empty; but this was soon over, and Mrs Oswald began to talk in her usual cheerful tone of voice. Catharine did not attempt to reply in the same strain.

The children were brought in after dinner, and Catharine, ashamed again to retire to her own room, and averse to conversation, listened in silence to their prattle. They soon began to talk of their uncle, and their innocent and simple expressions of love to him overcame her. She rose and walked to a window; one of the children followed, and mounting on a chair near where Catharine stood, put her little arms softly round her neck. Catharine turned, and concealing her weeping face upon the child, repaid her caresses an hundred-fold.

'Uncle Dunallan told us this morning, that we must often



talk of him to you, aunt Dunallan, and ask you not to forget him.'

Catharine kissed the child tenderly,—'This morning! Mary, did you see your uncle this morning?'

'Oh, yes; aunt Oswald made breakfast for uncle Dunallan, and Liliass and I sat on his knee.'

Catharine felt as if she had been deprived of a right: 'had I known this,' said she to Mrs Oswald, rather reproachfully.

'You should have known it, dear Catharine, had I thought it could have given either of you pleasure to part a second time: Edward knew not of my wish to see him in the morning. It was not a selfish wish; it was a desire to settle some trifling, but to these children indispensable affairs, which induced me to choose that time, when I knew all other matters were arranged; but it was unnecessary. Edward had not forgotten them; hurried as he has been, he has forgotten nobody.' Mrs Oswald then began a theme, to which Catharine could listen without losing her interest—the praises of Dunallan. The evening passed rapidly away, while Mrs Oswald recounted anecdotes of his early years, and described the change of character, which his religious principles had produced, 'for,' said she, 'he did not always think on these subjects as he now does. He was naturally the proudest of human beings; not exactly from a high opinion of himself, but from an exalted idea of the powers and virtues of the human mind, and from the high aim of his own. He passed through the early part of his education with the applause and love of all his masters, and the warm affections of his young companions. At college he distinguished himself by his uncommon power of uniting the character of the regular student to that of the agreeable companion, and intimate and beloved friend of a vast number of the young men there. He would then have made any exertion to obtain distinction. He studied half the night to gain the next prize, then spent the day with those who valued not learning, but as it could add by the superiority and refinement it gave to the pleasure of the passing hour; yet Dunallan was so strictly pure in his morals, and so regular in his hours, that he was pointed out to his young companions as a model for their imitation; and so much



was he beloved, that they willingly allowed his superiority. Amongst these, however, there was one whom Dunallan found to be his superior, and him he loved with all the ardour of his nature. He was a young man of fine genius, but of narrow fortune. He lived very retiredly at college, having few associates, and being wholly devoted to study. There was something in his appearance which greatly interested Dunallan, who eagerly sought his acquaintance, which with difficulty he obtained. Dunallan had heard that the singularity of his new friend's religious opinions was the cause of his love of seclusion, and in all the pride of reason, he flattered himself that he would easily convince the interesting enthusiast of the weakness and absurdity of those opinions, and be the means of drawing his learning and fine genius into notice. He soon got his friend to state all his opinions to him; and they were in direct opposition to Dunallan's most favourite systems. He felt indignant at seeing so fine a mind acquiesce, as his friend's did, in what he regarded as the prejudices of weak understandings, or of women and children. He found, however, that none of his arguments made the slightest impression on his friend; on the contrary, he seemed absolutely certain of the truth of his own opinions, and when Dunallan became heated, and sometimes even contemptuous, his friend continued perfectly calm, and even seemed to feel more affectionately for his proud opponent. Dunallan at last gave up all attempts to enlighten the enthusiast, but his affection for him increased every day; and he sought his society in preference to that of all others, though each tenaciously retained his own opinions on the subject of religion. Dunallan strenuously supported the dignity, the great capacity, and virtuous inclinations of human nature, while his friend insisted on its depravity, its perversion of its powers, and its weakness in resisting evil. The friends parted,—Dunallan his own master, from the excessive indulgence of his father; handsome, of high character for so young a man, rich, and remarkably agreeable from his natural desire to please, was courted and caressed wherever he went: His friend, poor, and in delicate health, retired to a curacy in the west of England. For the next year Dunallan resided chiefly with Harcourt, his brother-



in-law. He must have been more than man, had his morals not suffered in such society. At the end of that year his college friend died. I know no more. Dunallan soon after went abroad. When he returned to soothe the last days of his unfortunate sister, he had adopted all his friend's religious opinions.'

Catharine listened with deep attention. 'He told me,' said she, 'that his sentiments had been changed by some very distressing cause. He hoped I would adopt his way of thinking without such painful means.'

'I hope you will, my dear. Have you been examining the books he left for your perusal?'

'No, Madam. I could not read to-day. I did not attempt it.'

'Ah, that is the reason, my love. Had you made the attempt you would have succeeded.'

'I believe not,' replied Catharine, rather hurt.

Next day, however, Catharine did make the attempt, and succeeded in reading those parts at least which had been marked by Dunallan, and she became interested. The subject was new, and she was naturally of an inquiring turn of mind. This day was less unhappy than the preceding one; but the evening seemed long and sad. She thought of Dunallan's promise to write, and though she scarcely hoped to receive a letter so soon, she waited with impatience for the post-hour. Restless, and unable to occupy herself, she proposed to Mrs Oswald to walk out, intending to go in that direction in which she knew she should meet the man who brought the letters. Mrs Oswald seemed to have guessed her wishes, for she immediately proceeded to that walk. In a short time Catharine perceived the man at some distance, and approaching, as she thought, at a very slow pace. She quickened hers, and soon joined him. After alighting composedly from his horse, and fastening the bridle to a tree, he undid a bag, from which he took several letters, and after carefully looking them over, presented one to Catharine. It was from Elizabeth; and for the first time in her life, Catharine felt disappointed on seeing a letter from her.

'Is there no other letter for me?' asked she.

'No in this bag, my lady. I hae anither, but Mrs Allan, at



the post-office, guessed wha it was frae, and I hae it better pitten up.'

'Make haste, good Robin Skene,' said Mrs Oswald.

Robin looked pleased and important, and after fumbling some time in his bosom, brought forth a parcel very carefully wrapt up, from which he presented a letter to Catharine, and one also to Mrs Oswald.

Catharine turned away, and hastily broke the seal.

'You seemed in earnest, my dearest Catharine, when you permitted me to write so soon; I should not otherwise have yet ventured to remind you of your absent friend. You see how easily I shall persuade myself you are sincere, whenever you express wishes so gratifying to me, and try to forget the many times you have checked my slightest encroachment in my character of a relation with whom you were still unacquainted. I have been hastening from Arnmore all this day; but my heart and my imagination are still there; and now, at this late hour—alone at the little inn of ———, my fancy is still busy at Arnmore. I see the party assembled to close the day, by studying the pure precepts and animating promises of Scripture. My aunt, or perhaps my dear Catharine herself, is reading to her domestics, in the absence of her banished, and at this moment very sad friend. Oh, how I have longed all this day to return to my beloved home! But adieu to such fruitless wishes; and now let me begin my correspondence with you, my dearest Catharine, in the character you have wished me to assume. You have asked me to be your instructor in those singular opinions which lead to those singular ways which you have witnessed at Arnmore. You do not know what pleasure this request gave me. It is permitting me to attempt the only thing by which I may perhaps be enabled to atone for what I have done regarding you, and that will be, by freely pointing out those truths to you, without which I firmly believe you could not have enjoyed true happiness in any situation, and the knowledge of which is not dearly purchased, even by very great earthly disappointments or sorrows. Have you begun to read any of my books? Do you think the village or the schools will interest you? Remember your promise to give them all



up if they do not, at least if you think you ought, when you recollect the situation in which you have been placed. Do not suppose I mean to dictate to you, however, my dearest Catharine; but, believing as I do, that our happiness, even in this world, depends upon our being in the path of duty, can I love you, and not seek by every means in my power, to lead you into the path of true enjoyment? You would believe how sincerely I desire this, if you knew how dear you are, how dear you were to me before you had ever bestowed a look on me, but of aversion and disgust. But adieu, I must not in my first letter tire you of your preaching, but most truly attached,

‘E. H. DUNALLAN.’

Catharine had read Dunallan's letter several times before she recollected that there was any other being in existence. Mrs Oswald interrupted her thoughts by a request to return to the house to avoid the very heavy dew. Catharine kindly offered her arm to Mrs Oswald. ‘You too have a letter, my dear Madam?’

‘Yes, my love, a few lines,’ replied Mrs Oswald, holding out the letter to her.

Catharine declined reading it.—‘You must not think me so curious, my dear Mrs Oswald. I shall be most happy to hear whatever you choose from Mr Dunallan's letters; but I wish you always to read those passages to me yourself. I shall now read a part of mine to you, which I want your opinion of.’ She then read that passage, in which Dunallan supposed she had taken his place in reading to the servants.

Mrs Oswald smiled.—‘This is rather cunning, I think.’

‘I think so too,’ replied Catharine, ‘but should like if you, my dearest Mrs Oswald, would do as he wishes.’

‘Not I indeed,’ replied Mrs Oswald. ‘He very properly wishes you, my love, to act in his absence as the head of his family; but you must consider, that if you begin this good custom, you must carry it on. Should you suffer the fear of ridicule to make you give it up when people are here, you would, I fear, do more harm than reading at other times would do good.’



‘I do not think the dread of ridicule would deter me from doing anything I thought right,’ said Catharine. ‘I have never stood much in awe of the opinions of others.’

Mrs Oswald smiled.—‘Then, my dear, you have only to determine whether Dunallan’s is a right wish.’

‘I can have no doubt of that,’ replied Catharine, ‘since it is his.’

‘Ah, you ought to have a better reason, my dear.’

‘Well, it must be right to instruct the ignorant.’

‘Yes, my love, and to see that those under our care, which servants certainly are, have at least an opportunity of hearing the divine truths of revelation. We are all commanded to do good to all as we have opportunity; surely our influence cannot be so great any where as in our own houses.’

‘Well, my dear Madam, this is settled; and to-morrow you shall take me to the village, and to the schools. I must be able to answer Mr Dunallan’s questions; but you must direct me in every thing, my dear Mrs Oswald, for how can I, so ignorant myself, attempt to instruct others? I know not what parts of Scripture are proper to be read to servants.’

‘There are few parts which can be improper, my love,’ replied Mrs Oswald. ‘You will soon, while informing yourself, discover what is most instructive for others. Happily for the lower classes, which constitute the largest portion of society, it is the humble and unlearned who are chiefly addressed in Scripture.’

Catharine desired that she might be called very early next morning. Her ardent mind was now bent on attempting every thing recommended by Dunallan. She felt convinced that all his wishes were for her real happiness; and she took pleasure in the idea, that in his absence she might fit herself to be the companion of this esteemed friend.

Elizabeth’s letter, though left unread for the first time in her life till she perused that of another, gave Catharine the greatest pleasure. It was written in unusually high spirits for Elizabeth; and, after many playfully kind remarks on the change of feelings with regard to Dunallan, expressed in Catharine’s letter, on her arrival at Arnmore, concluded thus:—

‘And now, my own Catharine, I must tell you a secret, the



only secret I ever concealed from my first and dearest friend. You have often laughed at my high-flown notions (as you call them), of the influence of real affection. Know, then, that I spoke from experience, and that your friend has been engaged in heart and promise for two years, to a person whose name I believe never escaped her lips in your hearing. You will naturally ask, Why? I answer, because I could only have given you pain by the disclosure, as we were far too poor to think of marrying for years. Mr Melville is the younger son of a family of very moderate fortune; he is a lawyer, and very clever; but for some years at the commencement of his profession, a lawyer very rarely makes any thing. You know I had no fortune, and you will, I am very certain, feel almost as happy as your friend, when you find that your father's generosity to his nephews and nieces has removed every obstacle that stood in the way of my happiness; and that I so dearly love those who have thus obliged me, that I love even to be under obligation. But I must now introduce you to my dear and disinterested Philip Melville, who in a time of such scarcity of men—and of *such men*!—and a time of such plenty of heiresses, chose to place his affections on your portionless, and every way very moderately gifted Elizabeth. But you are unacquainted with Melville, and cannot judge of my feelings in the idea of never being separated from him. The sweet castles I build when I picture myself his wife, welcoming him home, after the studies or business of the day, to his comfortable (and I mean it to be) elegant, though moderate home; exerting all my powers to amuse and please him, which, you know, must always succeed; his conversation and affection, and his approbation of all I do; my mother so happy in seeing me so; my young brothers, guided by Melville, whom they already regard with love and esteem; the holidays passed at Arnmore, and the dear inhabitants of Arnmore coming to us sometimes.—Dear Catharine, are not my dreams very happy, and not so romantic as to be impossible?’

Elizabeth's letter was long, and expressed great enjoyment. Catharine entered warmly into her feelings, and for a time forgot every thing else. Her last occupation, before she retired to rest, however, was another perusal of Dunallan's letter. ‘Ah!’



thought she, when she had finished it, 'you have given me a rival in your affections, Elizabeth, and perhaps you soon will have one in mine!'

---

## CHAPTER X.

NEXT morning Catharine started from her pillow the moment she was called, and dressed with a rapidity which seemed not a little to surprise Martin, whom, when her toilet was finished, she desired to inform Mrs Scott the housekeeper, that she wished the servants to be assembled at the usual hour in the library. She then set herself to read the book which Dunallan had pointed out as the most proper to begin with, steadily determining, however tiresome she should find the occupation, to read every thing he had recommended with her whole attention. But this book she found most interesting. It was addressed to the heart as well as to the understanding. The subject was, the erroneous and unscriptural nature of the opinions on religious subjects generally prevalent among people in the higher classes of society. Catharine, as she read, felt the truth of every word, and she could scarcely believe that she had been thus employed for more than an hour, when Martin appeared to say, that Mrs Oswald and the servants were in the library. Catharine felt humbler when she entered the room where they were assembled, than she had ever done in her life before. She felt conscious that she now assumed a character to which she had no title, and blushing before she began to read, she said, 'I continue this custom because Mr Dunallan wishes it. I hope we shall all derive benefit and instruction. None of you can require it more than I do.'

Mrs Scott was on all occasions easily moved to tears; her softness, on Catharine's saying this, infected the other maids, so that her young lady had a weeping audience. Catharine thought their grief was occasioned by their master's absence, and by seeing his place filled by another. When she had finished, and the servants were retiring wiping their eyes, she desired Mrs



Scott to remain a little. 'You must not grieve so much, my good Mrs Scott,' said she, 'at Mr Dunallan's absence. Do you know we had letters from him last night, and he is well?'

'Oh!' replied Mrs Scott, almost sobbing, 'I mourn indeed for Mr Dunallan's absence, but it is not grief but joy which makes me cry now. I just thought I saw my own dear lady again, when you, ma'am, sat down in that chair. She used to look concerned as you did, ma'am, but oh! she had great cause. Her Mr Dunallan favoured nothing good, though he loved her so much he could not cross her; but the servants used to assemble here, and she used to read to them, when he was gone a-hunting, and at night before he and his gentleman-friends had left the dining-room. Oh, I never thought I should see this happy day! her son walking in her blessed steps, and you, ma'am, brought up so differently,—oh! it is more than I can stand!' and she put her hands to her face, and hurried out of the room. Catharine was affected: 'Poor good Mrs Scott! she does not know how little I deserve to be compared to any one so good.'

So great was Catharine's impatience to see all those places and arrangements which Dunallan had committed to her care, that she thought Mrs Oswald would never have done with breakfast. At last she rose, and offered to accompany her young friend wherever she chose. They proceeded first to the village. It was still early. Catharine, however, was much pleased with the clean and orderly appearance of the cottages into which she was conducted by Mrs Oswald, and at the pleasure which the people seemed to feel on seeing her. After having led Catharine through the village, and visiting various institutions of Dunallan's for the benefit of the people and children, schools, a library, etc., all which were under the immediate care of the clergyman of the parish, who was to report the progress and success of each to Catharine, Mrs Oswald led her to another school for girls. Catharine was delighted with the situation of this school. It was apart from the village, in a romantic spot on the banks of the lake, and surrounded by wood on every side except that which opened on the water. A sweet retired path lay directly between it and the castle.

'This situation,' said Mrs Oswald, 'was chosen by Dunallan,



in the hope that, whoever the lady of Arnmore might be, she would take this institution under her own peculiar and watchful care. I hope you will fulfil his wishes, my dear Catharine, and regard these interesting young villagers, as in some degree your own children. The general rules only have been acted upon, all particular regulations have been left for you, my dear,' continued Mrs Oswald. 'I have found the charge very interesting, but will be most happy to relinquish it to your care; my health and my age make me unfit for it.'

Catharine was equally delighted with the interior of the school-house, and the healthy happy looks of the children, who rose respectfully on her entrance, and answered the questions she put to them with intelligence and civility, dropping a grateful curtsy when she noticed them. Catharine recollected the children at Dunallan Castle, lying about their cottage doors in complete idleness, or running away to conceal themselves at her approach, or if bold enough to remain, answering with awkward shyness any thing she said to them. But, thought she, they were only taught to regard me as their superior, not their friend and benefactress. She could have staid here the whole day, she became so greatly interested. She liked to hear the children repeat hymns, and parts of Scripture, and was delighted with their eager desire to be permitted to repeat them to her; and the pleasure their countenances expressed when she praised their performances. Mrs Oswald at last reminded her that the forenoon was far spent.

'Every child at Arnmore is taught to read,' said Mrs Oswald, as they returned home, 'and the clergyman of the parish attends with the most unremitting attention to their religious instruction. He is an excellent man, and is looked up to by the whole parish. You will find him anxious to second any plan you propose for the benefit of your people.'

'How many people are supposed to reside on Mr Dunallan's estate?' asked Catharine.

'About nine hundred, including a small fishing town, at too great a distance for us to visit to-day; but which Dunallan takes the same charge of that he does of those places you have seen.'

'Happy Arnmore!' exclaimed Catharine, 'Poor Dunallan



Castle ! how much I ought to feel ashamed when I recollect how its people have been neglected. And now my father is enlarging all his farms, and the poorer tenants are emigrating to America, or wherever they can go. Had I known that it was possible, or rather had I taken the trouble to consider, I might have had at Dunallan Castle, such a village as that I have just seen. The money which I gave without reflection to the unfortunate beings who were leaving the estate, and whose grief I could not bear to witness, would have defrayed every expense ; but I shall write my father immediately. How happy should I be to see him interested in such a plan.'

Catharine was so busy all this day, she felt quite fatigued when she retired for the night ; yet her heart was light and gay. She had written to her father, to Elizabeth, and to Dunallan. The two first letters she had sealed up ; but the last she left to peruse once more. She was dissatisfied with what she had written. It was too long—Dunallan's was not half so long—yet she had so much to say—she read sentence by sentence, and determined to change each ; but, after these changes were made, she thought her letter stiff and cold, and at last decided to send that which she had first written.

Next day she visited the fishing-town, and other more distant parts of the estate, and was extremely gratified by all she saw, the reception she met with every where, and by the beautiful scenery through which they had passed ; for many of the cottages they had visited were far too distant for Mrs Oswald, or even Catharine, to have walked to them.

'And what am I to do?' asked Catharine, as they returned home ; 'in what way, my dear Mrs Oswald, am I to make myself useful to all these people?'

'By knowing about them all, my dear Catharine, and by convincing them that you do, and that you take an interest in their real happiness and prosperity ; by your steadily discountenancing the unworthy, and approving of and assisting the good ; by promoting the education of the children—oh, by a thousand ways, my dear young friend, particularly by carrying on those plans, begun by Dunallan, which are yet too new to succeed, unless they are fostered and protected by you.'



Catharine, after consulting with Mrs Oswald, laid down rules for the occupation of her time, which she resolved to abide by, until Dunallan's return. 'For I shall not leave Arnmore till then,' said she; 'and whoever visits me, must allow me to spend some of my time as I choose.'

One week passed away, and she kept strictly to all her rules and felt interested and happy. Mrs Oswald she loved more dearly every day—she appeared to her almost perfect, and her affection was returned with interest.

'Ah, Catharine!' said Mrs Oswald, one day after an interesting conversation with her young friend, 'I feel I am making another idol of you; I shall never learn to love with moderation.'

The children, too, were regarded by Catharine with the tenderest affection; and she felt the purest enjoyment in leading their young and opening minds to the admiration of all that was good and beautiful.

She had another letter from Dunallan during this week—all that was kind. To Mrs Oswald he described his situation in London, and his future intentions. He expected to set out on his destination in a few days. To Catharine, he wrote of herself, and of his own feelings.

'Your letter, my dearest Catharine, has almost relieved my mind from a load which has oppressed it ever since my unhappy arrival at your father's house. You request me so kindly, and I cannot help feeling so sincerely, to believe you when you say you are happy; you add so sweetly, that you wish me to forget the past, as you are beginning to do, that I feel satisfied you are at least not unhappy. The future, I will allow myself to hope, will produce for you far brighter days. You say you have read one of my books, and are interested in our people. Dearest Catharine, I entreat you, in your ardour to do good, not to forget your own health. You have undertaken too much. I shall regret having requested you to superintend my plans, if you expose yourself to fatigue, which, I assure you, is unnecessary. It is surprising how much influence a very small degree of interest, expressed by a person in your situation, has on your dependants. But I shall say no more on this subject. You know, my dear Catharine, how much it would pain me to think that I, in



seeking a source of pleasure for you, had loaded you with fatiguing occupations.

‘ You say, my dearest Catharine, that my aunt has made you forget my absence, by talking to you of my early days. She will, I fear, deceive you. She will praise, when, if you knew what a proud and arrogant being I then was, and “the course of sin,” which levelled me with the dust, you would cease to regard me with the unmixed esteem expressed in your sweetly frank letter. Will you be undeceived, my dearest Catharine? You asked me once, how the human mind could be brought, in the bustle of life, to be constantly guided by the principles of religion. I promised to explain this in my letters to you, as far as I could. The truth is, that, to a mind awakened from the delusive dreams of this world, religion becomes not only the support and consolation, but the source of its chief pleasures. I shall tell you in my next letter, how far I have experienced this myself; but the story is long, and I am too impatient for your reply, to delay my letter till another post. You perceive, my Catharine, that it is painful to me to appear to you what I really am not. Your character is, I think, easily known: and, therefore, in my eyes, the more amiable. Men, from their intercourse with a world, where most of those they meet with are indifferent about them, where some wish to deceive, and others to lead astray, acquire a power of concealing their emotions, which gives them an unfair advantage over women, who rarely in early life can conceal theirs. I should wish you, my Catharine, to feel certain that I have not this advantage over you. The very suspicion of it must produce a degree of reserve, which it is the wish of my heart to do away. I am thus anxious to inspire you with confidence in me, because I so earnestly wish you to feel that friendship for me which I already feel for you, and which cannot exist where we have any doubt of our knowledge of the real character.

‘ And now, my dearest of friends, I shall answer the last part of your letter, in which you so ingenuously confess to me, that you cannot say *you like* the first book I recommended to you, because every page of it condemns you. Your thoughts—your wishes—your time—your influence—your fortune, have all been em-



ployed in those pursuits considered by this writer as unworthy of a rational and immortal being ; “ and yet,” you add, “ my life has been as innocent, and as little shaded by great faults, as most others.” You nobly say, you will not affect a modesty in speaking of yourself, which you not feel, when the subject is one on which you really wish to gain information, and you naturally ask if we must look on the greatest part of our fellow-creatures as guilty in the sight of Heaven, when most of them feel so secure of being accepted there at last ? I acknowledge the difficulty of answering your question ; but it is equivalent to that which was proposed long ago : “ Are there few that be saved ? ” You, I dare say, remember the instructive answer of Him who said, “ I am Truth.” The answer was, “ Enter *ye* in at the strait gate ; for narrow is the way which leadeth to everlasting life, and few there be that find it.” Though my book does condemn you, my dearest Catharine, I must agree with it, because I am sure it is not stricter in what it requires, than that short but comprehensive law, which demands that we shall love our Creator with *all* our hearts, and our souls, and our minds, and our neighbours as ourselves. I entreat you, Catharine, to use your own excellent powers of mind to follow out the meaning of those words, and you must be convinced that my book cannot possibly require more. Will you be displeased if I say, that I take pleasure in your feeling of self-condemnation ? I do indeed, my sweet friend, because I know that “ the whole ” do not feel their need of the “ physician,” but “ the sick,” and I wish you to know the Physician of souls. I entreat you to read on, and become acquainted with the Christian system. If you feel your heart become an advocate for its truth, before your mind is informed, and your reason convinced, which, I think, from your last letter, may be the case, I entreat you not to cease reading what is addressed chiefly to your reason ; because an uninformed Christian, in your rank of life, is exposed to having his belief staggered very frequently, from his ignorance of those perfectly convincing answers which have been given to the attacks of infidels, who have, in all ages, attempted in vain to subvert a religion so strict in its demands, and pure in its precepts ; amongst those infidels there have been, and still are,



men of at least very great wit and ingenuity. What a letter I have written! but if you knew the pleasure I feel, after the business and bustle of the day, in retiring to think of and address you, I know you would not wish to shorten this sweetest of enjoyments. Adieu, my dear, my very dearest friend,

‘E. H. DUNALLAN.’

Catharine studied every word of Dunallan's letter with the deepest interest; his wishes with regard to herself she scarcely understood; but she determined to read attentively every book he recommended to her, and frankly avow to him the impression they made on her mind. His extreme openness with regard to himself, had fully the effect he desired in gaining her confidence. She felt ready to impart to him the most secret thoughts of her heart. This desire to make her acquainted with his very errors, rather than that she should form a false and too high opinion of him, though it gratified, yet startled her. She had often been advised by her father, to avoid seeking to know the preceding private life of the man she married. ‘Let me, my dear child,’ he would say, ‘be entrusted with making all necessary inquiries respecting his character. You cannot be a judge. An innocent, well-educated young woman would never marry, if she knew the private history of most of the young men she sees; but we must take the world as we find it,’ he would add, laughing. ‘The noblest characters have defects. An amiable, sweet-tempered, sensible, affectionate wife will cure a man of all those youthful errors; but a prying over-correct wife is the devil.’ Catharine believed her father, and looked on young men as privileged to be wicked to a certain degree; and regarded it as indelicate, and disgustingly over-correct in her sex to take any concern how a young man spent his life in private, provided he always acted honourably, and as others did in society. Had Dunallan, then, been particularly faulty? She could not believe this, because her father had assured her, that even *she* might be satisfied with all he could learn respecting the morality of his early years, which had been singularly spotless. Catharine replied with perfect frankness to this part of Dunallan's letter. She showed how much she valued his confidence; but that she



rather shrunk from the proof of it, which he offered to give; yet she wished to know about his college friend, and also the nature of the change which had taken place in his own mind. 'But do not, my dear friend,' she wrote, 'gratify my curiosity, if doing so can recal one painful circumstance.'

---

## CHAPTER XI.

CATHARINE'S life, for the first fortnight after Dunallan's departure, was wholly devoted to those pursuits she had begun at his request; and every day, as her information increased, and her conversations with Mrs Oswald made her more acquainted with the opinions and sentiments considered by that lady and Dunallan necessary to constitute the character of a real Christian, she became more convinced that they were right. To Mrs Oswald she confided every difficulty and doubt of her own mind; while, according to Dunallan's wish, she persevered in making herself acquainted with what he esteemed the Christian system; and in Mrs Oswald she found the tenderness of a mother united to the sincerity of a friend, equally capable from natural talent, information, and experience, to assist and enlighten her young but strong and candid mind. Catharine felt Dunallan's absence; she also thought with pain of the solitary situation of her father; yet she was now so constantly occupied and pleased, and interested, that she dreaded any interruption to her new pursuits, and felt quite annoyed on being informed, one forenoon, on her return from visiting her school, that a lady had just arrived. Catharine did not inquire who the lady was, but hurrying to her room, gave way to the impatience of the moment. Some of our troublesome country neighbours at last, thought she; what a plague! She rung for Martin.

'What lady is here, Martin?'

'Mrs Williams, Ma'am.'

'Mrs Williams! Ah, I rejoice to hear it.'

'She is indeed a very sweet-looking lady, Ma'am. Mrs Oswald sent for me to ask where you were Ma'am. She wished



me to go for you, but Mrs Williams would not suffer you to be interrupted.'

Catharine felt half afraid, yet longed to see this Mrs Williams, so much esteemed by Dunallan. An apprehension of inferiority was, however, still painful to Catharine; and though she struggled against this proud feeling, yet her raised head, and half cold expression, as she entered the room where Mrs Williams was, gave an air of formal politeness to her address, rather than the real pleasure she felt at meeting her. Mrs Williams' manner was very mild, and perfectly easy.

'We have been talking of you, my dear Catharine,' said Mrs Oswald.

Catharine blushed. 'Then I regret having interrupted your conversation,' replied she; 'for I am very sensible of the advantage of a favourable impression having been given before acquaintance commences.'

'And are you so certain, Catharine, of my giving a favourable impression of you?'

'I believe so.'

Mrs Williams smiled, but said nothing. There was something in her appearance that at once excited both respect and interest. She was handsome, as far as a graceful figure, very fine eyes, and a charming smile, could make one so; but an air of thoughtfulness, and the very smile which, engaging as it was, seemed more from politeness than feeling, conveyed an idea of superiority to trifles, and to trifling compliments, which was the rather pleasing, because the whole turn of her expressive countenance bore the same elevated character. 'Mrs Oswald has told me how you were employed, Mrs Dunallan,' said she; 'and that you feel yourself interested in such occupations.'

'I do indeed; and I hope I shall continue to feel myself so.'

'O, no! do not expect that,' replied Mrs Williams; 'you must prepare yourself for disappointment, that when you meet with it you may not be disgusted, and tempted to give up all your useful employments. I have often been on the verge of doing so.'

'I might very easily be tempted to do so,' replied Catharine, 'for I am not very patient; but I did not undertake these oc-



cupations from any expectation of pleasure or amusement, or even interest. Mr Dunallan taught me to regard them as a duty, and I still expect I shall have to struggle with my natural aversion to the restraint of regular employment: hitherto, however, I have found myself more interested than I imagined I should be,—more, indeed, than I ever was before in any pursuit; because the end at which I wish to aim is so much nobler.’

‘True,’ replied Mrs Williams, looking much pleased. ‘But still I cannot help fearing you may find many things both disappointing and provoking in your endeavours to improve your people; the parents of the children, even, are such impediments to their improvement, that at times one feels quite discouraged.’

‘Mrs Oswald had prepared me so well to expect that,’ said Catharine, ‘that I have been surprised at my success. I have made many new rules, to every one of which the parents of my children have acceded without any difficulty.’

‘Really,’ said Mrs Williams, smiling, ‘you must have some secret way of charming them to do your pleasure.’

Catharine described all she had done in the most animated language; and so deeply was she occupied in conversing on such subjects, that time passed away unobserved. Mrs Oswald and Mrs Williams became equally interested, and when, after a very long conversation, the latter rose to take leave, Catharine found she still had so much to inquire about, and to say, that she earnestly and affectionately pressed her to remain until the next day. Mrs Williams, who, Catharine felt, returned the interest she excited, was easily persuaded to comply with a request urged so evidently from the heart.

Catharine found Mrs Williams’ society singularly pleasing. She seemed to guess what subjects would be most interesting, and continued to turn the conversation constantly to them, while her evident feeling of interest, and her confiding manner to Catharine, completely succeeded in gaining her confidence. Mrs Williams talked of Dunallan, and of his singular opinions, which she avowed were also her own. She spoke of him with more than esteem,—with the deepest gratitude, and explained its cause. He had been the friend of her husband, and had



watched him in his last illness with the tenderness of a brother; he had been the means of making his death-bed a scene of peace and triumph. He had been her own friend, when left a widow and wretched. He was the guardian of her children—and such a guardian!

Catharine listened with delight to the praises of Dunallan, and Mrs Williams, though unable from emotion at times to proceed, seemed determined to make her acquainted with her husband's and her own obligations to him, and with that unwearied and tenderly benevolent part of his character which her misfortunes had brought to her knowledge. Catharine wept with her, and Mrs Williams' countenance brightened through her tears, when she saw the impression her story had made.

Next morning Mrs Williams took leave, after receiving the willing promise of an early visit from Catharine.

Many of the neighbouring families had now called at Arnmore; but though Catharine saw that they easily would have been prevailed on to lengthen their visits, none of them except Mrs Williams had so far interested or pleased her as to inspire a wish that they should.

One evening a party arrived whom Catharine was not a little surprised to see,—Mrs St Clair and her son. She could not conceive why the latter should choose so soon to visit her after what had passed, and particularly in Dunallan's absence. She felt displeased, and received him with extreme coldness. Mrs St Clair she attempted to meet as an old friend, but did not succeed; and she often wished, as the evening passed heavily on, that she had invited some of her morning visitors to remain.

St Clair attempted to appear cheerful. He told Catharine that he was just going abroad, and that he could not prevail on himself to leave the country, perhaps for years, without once again seeing one of his earliest friends. Catharine only bowed. An angry glow crossed St Clair's brow, but he said nothing. Catharine had known him from her childhood, however, and was well acquainted with the expression of his countenance. She soon perceived that he was narrowly scanning hers, and was aware that he had now come to discover whether she was as unhappy as she knew his late disappointment from her made him



wish her to be. His mother, she had no doubt, partook of her son's feelings.

Catharine expected a letter from Dunallan this evening; she almost wished it might not arrive; and she shrunk, as the hour of prayers approached, from the idea of the ridicule which her care of her servants would excite in the minds of Mrs St Clair and her son. The usual post hour, however, passed, and no letter arrived from Dunallan. Catharine felt relieved, but disappointed; and her endeavours to converse cheerfully with her guests, which had hitherto succeeded only in part, now gave place to absent thoughtfulness. Mrs Oswald attempted to supply her place, but all she said was received with such uncivil coldness, that after several good-natured but fruitless endeavours to overcome the prejudice and dislike with which Mrs St Clair seemed to regard her, she gave up the attempt, and turned to Catharine.

'Our messenger has probably been detained to-night, my dear,' said she, observing the sadness which now began to steal over the expressive countenance of her young friend; 'you know he often is. We shall have our letters to-morrow morning.'

'I only *hoped* for letters, I did not quite *expect* them to-night, my dear madam,' answered Catharine, smiling sweetly, in reply to the tenderly affectionate manner of Mrs Oswald's address, so unlike that of her proud and gloomy guests. A pause in the conversation ensued. St Clair looked earnestly at Catharine, as if to read in her countenance from whence she expected those longed-for letters.

'I hear your friend Elizabeth is just going to be married to one of the young Melvilles,' said Mrs St Clair; 'I suppose you hear frequently from her on the eve of such an event.'

'Very frequently,' replied Catharine. But she did not pursue this subject, for Mrs St Clair had always seemed to dislike Elizabeth.

Another pause followed, and of such long continuance, that Catharine at last, scarcely knowing what she said, asked St Clair if he had been acquainted with Mr Walderford at college?

'I was,' replied he; 'he was then supposed to possess very superior talents, and great expectations were formed respecting



him, until he chose to adopt a set of enthusiastic notions, which now, I believe, I must not mention with disrespect in your presence, Catharine—Mrs Dunallan, I mean: pardon me.’ He did seem to revolt at the new appellation. ‘I must confess, however,’ continued he, ‘that I have rather avoided Walderford since he became so singular.’

‘Did you value his acquaintance before that time?’ asked Catharine.

‘Extremely,—every one did. He had the clearest head of any young man at the university, and the quickest penetration into character, with the most kind and affectionate of hearts, joined to an uncommon share of humour and talent for society, notwithstanding his natural reserve. Every one loved and respected him. Poor Walderford!’ continued St Clair, ‘it was most unlike his knowledge of mankind, and his usual good sense, to make known his adoption of such opinions; he might at least have confined them to his own breast.’

‘But *can* such opinions be concealed, my dear Sir?’ asked Mrs Oswald, in her quick way.

‘Why not, Madam? are we not forced at times to conceal far more powerful——’ St Clair hesitated. ‘We must learn to——. I know men who have singular opinions on many subjects,’ continued he, recovering himself, ‘who never talk of them but in confidence. I have notions myself on that very subject, religion, which are perhaps quite as singular, though very different from Walderford’s; but why shock people by constantly avowing our heresies from common opinion. I believe,’ continued St Clair, ‘every man who thinks at all, must form some opinion on that subject; but as those opinions are of importance only to himself, I think he is mad if he exposes himself to universal ridicule and contempt, by attaching such importance to a set of dogmas, and acting upon them with the blind zeal and self-satisfaction which seem to inspire poor Walderford.’

‘But what is there in those opinions, which really ought to shock any one?’ asked Catharine. ‘You said, Mr St Clair, that to me you must not now mention them with disrespect; I suppose from their similarity to those ascribed to Mr Dunallan. I confess it does pain me to hear them mentioned with disre-



spect; and allow me to add, that I am sure, if you were really acquainted with those opinions, and, still more, with their effects on those who adopt them, you would describe them in gentler terms.'

'They are opinions very shocking to common sense at least,' said Mrs St Clair;—'Mr Walderford's opinions, I mean.'

'I beg pardon,' said young St Clair, 'for having used such harsh expressions. I have little knowledge of Mr Dunallan's notions on any subject; but the opinions I mean, though they are gaining ground in society, or, at least, are acquiring an ascendancy over a certain class of minds, shrink from the examinations of reason and philosophy'

'I believe,' said Mrs Oswald, mildly, 'that it is an allowed maxim amongst philosophers, that the supporters of any system ought to be permitted to state their own opinions. Now, in this case, you must allow me at least to correct your statement, Mr St Clair. The advocates for the opinions you have mentioned, do not shrink from the tribunals of reason and philosophy, from a dread of their award; but they say that reason or philosophy are of no value, until they are enlightened by that revelation which declares the natural reason and wisdom of man to be foolishness, and its philosophy vanity. The supporters of those opinions therefore regard reason, when it discards revelation as its guide, as an ignis fatuus—a light that leads astray; and philosophy as an unmeaning though imposing word.'

'You are right, Madam,' replied St Clair, warmly: 'I did state the case unfairly; those opinions do set reason and philosophy at defiance; and the weakest blockhead who adopts them, immediately thinks himself superior to, and fitted to instruct, the wisest of his fellow-men. This is one of the many disgusting features of the system,' added St Clair, rising abruptly, and walking towards a window, desiring apparently to put an end to the subject.

'You must allow me to say one word,' replied Mrs Oswald. 'The defect you mention, cannot with a shadow of fairness be ascribed to the system, because its very character and essence is humility.'

St Clair remained silent, and another pause in the conversation



followed. The evening was beautiful, and, though late, Catharine proposed walking.

‘We have many charming walks here,’ said she, turning to St Clair (who remained at the window), and directing her eyes to the scenery below.

He looked in the same direction for a moment, then turned away. He seemed to hate its beauty.

‘You used to admire this part of the day, and like to walk at sunset, Mr St Clair,’ said Catharine, in a voice less cold than that in which she had hitherto addressed him.

He appeared softened for a moment, then said, turning gloomily away, ‘I used to like and admire many things which I must not now trust myself to look at. Sunset is one.’

Catharine felt his meaning, and reproached herself for having said any thing to produce such a reply. She turned to Mrs St Clair, and again resumed her endeavours to find some topic of conversation that might excite her interest ; but her attempts for some time were unsuccessful ; the subjects, at least, on which Catharine chose to converse, had no interest for Mrs St Clair ; and those into which she would eagerly have entered, were studiously avoided by Catharine. At last she recollected that Mrs St Clair was engaged in superintending the erection of a magnificent mansion at her beautiful isle, and she easily succeeded in leading her to talk of it. Mrs Oswald who never was idle, when she saw that young St Clair determined to remain silent, employed herself busily at her work. St Clair stood with his back to the window, and his eyes either fixed in deep thought on the carpet, or raised to Catharine, with an expression that betrayed the subject of his contemplations. He looked miserable, and his uneasiness seemed to increase the longer he indulged in thought.

Catharine continued to listen to Mrs St Clair, and at her request, began to sketch the plan of a Gothic window for the hall of her new house.

‘Oh ! that is quite beautiful,’ exclaimed Mrs St Clair, when she had finished it. ‘Look, Arthur, is not this much more perfect than any of those in our plans ? but you have lost all interest in the house now,’ said she reproachfully, as he slowly



advanced from the window, 'you are most unaccountably changed, Arthur. Is it not beautiful?'

'Beautiful, indeed! shall I preserve the sketch for you, Madam!'

A servant at this moment appeared. Catharine knew it was to announce the hour of prayers. Mrs Oswald said, 'very well, John;' and the servant left the room.

'Do fix the sketch, Mr St Clair,' said Catharine, placing drawing materials before him. 'I must leave you for a short time, Madam,' added she, turning to Mrs St Clair, and a good deal embarrassed. But meeting Mrs Oswald's look of anxious concern, and recollecting the contempt with which she had treated the fears of that good lady, lest she should be deterred from duty by the dread of ridicule, she recovered her composure, and said in a calm tone of voice, 'Mr Dunallan thinks it proper that his servants should have the Scriptures read to them daily, and, in his absence, I have undertaken, directed by Mrs Oswald, to continue this custom.'

Mrs St Clair and her son looked at each other. 'Do you not admit your friends to the benefit of your instructions?' asked Mrs St Clair.

'I do not pretend to instruct,' replied Catharine, mildly; 'but Mrs Oswald has convinced me that the attempt at informing our servants is a duty. I merely read a portion of Scripture, and a short explanation; and, as I *am* convinced of its being a duty, I must not be deterred by ridicule from performing it.'

'No one certainly could be so cruel as to ridicule any thing defended so ——.' St Clair proceeded thus far, and then stopped. 'Will you not admit us?' asked he.

'You must excuse me,' replied Catharine; 'were Mr Dunallan at home, I should entreat you to join us.'

St Clair turned away in displeasure. When Mrs Oswald and Catharine returned, they found Mrs St Clair and her son looking gloomier than before. There was a sweet calmness and elevation in the expression of Catharine's countenance, however, and a dignified and cheerful composure in Mrs Oswald's, which commanded their respect; and by degrees they were restored to an apparently happier state of feeling.

Catharine felt greatly relieved, when Mrs St Clair declared



her intention of going next day. She would have concealed her satisfaction, but saw by the angry expression of St Clair's countenance, that he had perceived it. She felt extremely displeased, however, at the freedom with which he continued to watch her every word and look; and the cold calmness of her eye, when she addressed him, seemed to recal to him the remembrance of her situation.

Next morning at breakfast, a very large packet was brought to Catharine; she observed the post-mark ———, and became very pale. St Clair seemed to understand the cause, and it darkened his brow.

‘No wonder such letters should be longed for,’ said he, contemptuously, but bitterly, and looking at its size.

‘Certainly not,’ replied she, ‘when the contents too are always even more interesting than they are expected to be.’

St Clair's eye flashed; but for a moment he was silent, then said with forced calmness, ‘You have convinced me at last, Madam, that your sex possesses one virtue, which I have hitherto been such an infidel as to doubt,—that of becoming moulded into new habits, and new feelings, and new affections, with a facility almost incomprehensible, and in proportion,’ added he sarcastically, ‘to the dislike and contempt with which they formerly viewed those habits and those objects which they afterwards value.’

‘You ought rather, from my experience, to be convinced of an unhappy defect in my sex,’ replied Catharine, ‘that of allowing prejudice to take such complete possession of the mind, that nothing less than a superiority in every thing, almost more than human, can overcome it.’

St Clair bit his lip. Catharine had looked calmly and fixedly at him while she spoke, and the effect of what she had said on the expression of his countenance almost frightened her; but his reflection on Dunallan had roused her spirit, and she now longed for an opportunity of honouring him in the presence of those contemptuous St Clairs.

‘Pray, read your letter, Madam,’ said Mrs St Clair. ‘I beg we may not for a moment prevent your enjoying that pleasure.’

Catharine only bowed, and then broke the seal. She looked



at the date, then at the conclusion, but that was too kind to be read in such company : tears filled her eyes, tears that she saw were observed, but she cared not. She folded up her letter, and laid it by her, and then attempted to converse with Mrs St Clair ; but her thoughts wandered to her letter, and it was with great pleasure she heard Mrs St Clair's carriage announced, and saw her soon after depart with her haughty and disappointed son.

Catharine embraced Mrs Oswald with unusual tenderness :—  
' You have seen a specimen of my friends, my dearest Madam,' said she, ' and I have had many such. You see how sincerely they wish for my happiness.'

' But you must have some excuse for this lady, my dear,' replied Mrs Oswald. ' I see how matters stand ; you have disappointed her dearest hopes and favourite plans, and her son's also. Ah ! my dear Catharine, you may be very thankful that the singularly pleasing exterior of that young man did not engage your youthful affections ; he could not have made you happy. But adieu for a little, my love, I see you are impatient to read your letter.'

Catharine shut herself up in her room, and was soon completely absorbed. Dunallan's letter consisted of many sheets closely written.

' Each succeeding letter from you, my dearest Catharine, confirms me in the idea I had formed of your character, and strengthens the hope that I shall soon see you become all I could wish. You are right, my sweet friend, in your supposition, that kindly as I express my interest in you, and kindly—tenderly as I feel for you, there is yet a want, a defect in your character, which I have never clearly expressed. I will tell you my reason, because, until I received your last letter, I did not suppose you would have understood my meaning. I see you look surprised ; but my dear Catharine, had I said to you the week before we left Dunallan Castle, that you were ignorant of the true nature of religion, would you not have repelled the charge, and regarded me as a gloomy bigoted enthusiast, as your friends did ? I would not now say this of you, my dearest Catharine, though my opinion was not greatly changed, until I received your last (to me precious) letter, which proves to me that you begin to feel that humbling



sense of your natural disrelish of what true religion requires, which I think must be felt before we can at all appreciate the Christian system. You have discovered the difference between the religion of the imagination, and that of the heart and understanding. You are convinced that the former is of no value, and that the last is absolutely necessary ; but your understanding feels its weakness in attempting to comprehend the doctrines, and your heart its opposition to the strict and spiritual precepts of the New Testament—and this pains you. What will you think of my affection for you, my Catharine, when I say that I hope this pain may increase ? I wish I could bear it for you, but that is impossible. If by this means you are to be brought into the fold, the Shepherd of the flock alone can carry on His own process in your mind. Watch its progress, my dear Catharine, and seek to know more of His character, who has your heart in His hand. Study His gracious promises to the young, and to all who really wish to devote themselves to His service. Study His precepts, and attempt to perform all He demands. You will every moment feel your inability, and thus your humble opinion of yourself will increase : the more it does so, the more you are fitted to value that religion, which is suited to those only who feel truly, experimentally, that in themselves they are lost. Fear not to tread this lowly path, my dear Catharine, for it leads to the purest, the most exalted happiness : because it leads us to seek it from Him who is its source, and whom a hopeless sense of our natural unfitness to love and serve as He demands, leads us to regard as our only Saviour, our strength, our light, our peace, our all. But I say too much—now you will not understand me. Oh ! that you did, my beloved Catharine.

‘ You wish to know, my dear Catharine, what led me to adopt the principles which now influence me. You wish also to know more of my college friend, in whom my aunt has greatly interested you ; “but not,” you sweetly add, “if recalling any thing that is past would give me pain.” It cannot pain me to recal the idea of him ; it is, indeed, seldom long absent from my thoughts ; and it would add to my happiness, my dear Catharine, if I could interest you in the memory of the being on earth whom I have loved most, and have been most indebted to.



You shrink, most naturally shrink, from the knowledge of that miserable course of sin which marked a part, thank Heaven, a short part of my youth ; but you may trust me. I am not one of those who imagine a young and inexperienced mind can in any way be benefited by becoming acquainted with the secrets of wickedness ; and to you, my dearest Catharine ! you, of whose delicacy I consider myself the guardian ! But no more of this—forgive even so much. What I wish is this—to convince you of the utter incapacity of the human heart to be truly moral. Temptations may differ, and lead to different results, but none can ever comprehend what pure morality is, without aid from Heaven, without a revelation and the power to understand it. I am willing to give you myself as an example of this incapacity, not because I think I was better disposed than others, but because I am better acquainted with what has passed in my own heart ; and because I began life with a high aim, and a high opinion of man's moral capacity. I do feel half ashamed, however, to commence my own historian, and almost shrink from the fulfilment of my promise ; but I cannot otherwise make you acquainted with my friend, or describe the power of his mind over mine, or the change of my own. Dear Catharine, I wish I could give you an idea of the interest I feel in your real happiness while I write,—in your soul's happiness, that immortal soul, which has been placed by Heaven in some degree in my charge, and which must be prepared during the short period of life, for an existence that shall never end ! But no more of this, lest I should disgust instead of convincing you.

‘ I believe, my dear Catharine, you know that I was peculiarly happy in a mother. During her life, as even I then knew, my education was a continual cause of difference of opinion between her and my father ; yet so gently did she differ from him, and on every other thing she was so sweetly yielding, that excepting on one point, she generally directed all my concerns. That one point was religion. My mother's opinions on that subject were disagreeable to my father in the extreme, and he was determined that I should not imbibe them. My mother would have preferred a home education during early youth ; my father con-



sidered a large school most suited to develope and strengthen the character of a boy. As my home did not promise those virtuous examples which are the chief advantage of a private education, my mother at last consented to part with me, on my father's yielding to her wish, that I might be placed where there were only a small number of boys. My father, however, chose my tutor; and the gentleman on whom he fixed, had very requisite excepting the one most valued by my mother. He was a man of superior talents; a deep and elegant scholar, with a taste singularly refined and cultivated; he had also lived much in the world, and his manners were extremely polished. My companions in this gentleman's house were a limited number of boys, sons of some of the first families in the country. With such a tutor, who devoted himself to the improvement of his pupils, and with a natural inclination for those pursuits most valued by him, my progress was so rapid as very soon to gain me a high place in his favour. It was also my nature to desire ardently to be loved by those around me, and I easily gained the affections of my young companions. When I visited home I was caressed by every one. My father, I perceived, regarded me as his pride and hope. My mother's affection for me seemed increased by my absence from home. She attempted, however, with the most solicitous tenderness, to convince me that no mental acquirements, no personal accomplishments, no degree of the esteem, or love, or admiration of others, were of any value without religion. She said they were snares to foster pride, and delude the soul. I listened to her, because I loved her, and could not give her pain; but my tutor was a Deist, and I had learned from him to consider all systems of religion, in short, all religion excepting that of nature, as priestcraft and deception, suited only to trammel weak and ignorant minds. I remained with my tutor till I went to college. You can hardly, my dear Catharine, conceive a being more ignorant of the world, and human nature as it really is, than I then was. My companions and myself, while with our tutor, lived almost apart from all other society; and his kindness, a pleasant method of conveying instruction, joined to the elevated tone of morality, and high sense of honour which he inculcated, led us to love and esteem



him so warmly, that even during our visits at home, which at his request were very short, we still acted as if under his eye. Several of us went at the same time to college, our heads filled with learning, and our hearts glowing with admiration of the characters of antiquity—their patriotism, their eloquence, and, I may add, their pride; and turning with contempt from all the humbler virtues—virtues which Christianity in its precepts, and the common realities of life, teach us to regard as most valuable. At this time I lost my mother, and her death first taught me the insufficiency of the theories of philosophy to overcome, or even to soften real grief. But time did what they could not do; and the affectionate cares of my young friends drew me again into those studies and pursuits for which I had lost all relish. My ambition to excel returned. I again laboured for distinction, and soon succeeded in obtaining a reputation almost equal to my desires. My father had early taught me to regard the senate of my country as the proper place for the employment of my talents and acquirements; and, above all, where I might distinguish myself most conspicuously. I soon found that he was right. All the young men of family at college who were remarkable for talent, were taught to prepare for the same destination. Eloquence became one of my favourite pursuits. I studied all its masters with ardent attention, and cultivated every exterior grace. I also, with the permission of my superiors, prevailed on some of my numerous friends at college to meet together, for the purpose of improving and exhibiting our powers of elocution; and this meeting soon became the favourite recreation of all the young men most distinguished for talent at the university. We invited all our college friends who chose to attend, and to give their opinions on the subjects in debate.

‘One evening as I declaimed on a favourite subject, and was listened to with eager attention and frequent bursts of applause, I remarked one striking and unknown countenance opposite to me, which did not join in the general expression of approbation. There was something in this countenance which attracted me so forcibly, that my eyes continually returned to it; but I finished my declamation, and returned to my seat amidst



thunders of applause without having received one mark of admiration from him. His eye, however, followed me, and he half arose as if to speak, but another young man got up, and he resumed his seat. I immediately called on the stranger, as I had seen him half up before the other rose ; but he seemed to wish to decline speaking, until called on by half the assembly. A blush glowed for a moment on his fine but pale countenance, and for the first few words he hesitated ; but, soon recovering himself, his low and harmonious voice, and beautiful language, instantly arrested every one's attention ; and then the strikingly clear though simple arguments, by which he proved that all I had said was mere sophistry, extorted applause even from those who were so warmly attached to me, that they would willingly have shared the disgrace of my defeat in argument. The stranger's speech was short, and he retired to his seat, apparently wishing to conceal himself from the many inquiring eyes which were fixed upon him. My friends looked at me, expecting that I should reply ; but I felt that I could not, and openly avowed my inability, and the extreme admiration with which the overpowering talents and eloquence of the last speaker had filled me. This avowal was followed by the applauses of my friends, and now also by those of my interesting opponent, who, by a feeling and beautifully expressed compliment to my *noble* ingenuousness, as he called it, and also to my talents, which he said could only fail when they undertook the defence of so bad a cause, in some degree restored me to my own good opinion. The subject of discussion had been one on which I had often before declaimed, and enjoyed the consciousness of my powers of eloquence, whilst I had almost at will excited the deepest emotions in the young and ardent spirits who listened to me. I heard no more that evening. Many attempts were made to reply to the stranger, all equally unsuccessful ; and, after listening for some time, he took advantage of a dispute about precedency, and retired. No one near me could give me any information respecting him : he seemed quite unknown, even by name. I had sought his acquaintance by my looks ; but, though I thought that he regarded me with complacency when our eyes met, he seemed rather to avoid looking at me ; and I felt hurt even at



this supposed rejection of my advances. When he retired, however, I no longer found any interest in what passed. When the assembly dispersed, I followed a young man with whom alone I had seen the stranger converse, and learned that his name was Churchill; that he was the son of a clergyman, and was himself studying for the same profession, which induced him to cultivate every means of improving his talent for public speaking. I learned, also, that it was his choice, from the limited income of his family, and still more from the singularity of his own religious opinions, to live as retiredly as possible. I expressed myself so warmly in his praise, that Churchill's friend asked if I wished for his acquaintance.

“I have courted him unsuccessfully with my eyes,” replied I, laughing. “I should like extremely to be acquainted with him, however, if he has no objection.”

‘Next day I met Churchill's friend, but he said nothing to me on the subject of the preceding evening's conversation.

“I perceive,” said I to him, “that your friend has declined my acquaintance.”

‘He made some awkward apology; and I cannot describe to you, my dear Catharine, how much my pride was hurt by this refusal of my offered regard. I determined, however, that at least I should not deserve his contempt. I studied the subject on which we were the next evening to debate with the deepest attention. On that evening my eye sought for him whenever I entered the hall. He was there, and I thought looked away rather confused when our eyes met. After several speeches, Churchill rose, and again drew forth the most unbounded applause; yet when I followed him on this night, and on the opposite side of the question, the general voice seemed to be with me. I avoided looking at Churchill; but as we left the hall, we came together to a narrow door-way. I stood back to let him pass. He bowed: “Of courtesy, not of right,” said he, as he passed.

“I feel it of right in every way,” replied I, He only smiled, shook his head, and bowed again.

“Are you acquainted with Mr Churchill?” asked a young man who walked with me towards my apartments.



“No,” replied I, “he does not wish for my acquaintance.”

“Not wish for it!” exclaimed my young companion; “he surely has not declined it,” added he, “if you wish for his.”

“I certainly wish for his,” replied I, “ardently wish for it; but he does not feel on this subject as you do. I believe he does not think my acquaintance worth seeking.”

Some one put his arm within mine. It was dark, and knowing that many of my friends walked near me, I was not surprised.

“Will you accept of the acquaintance of a listener?” said the voice of Churchill.

“I was delighted. “I will grasp at his acquaintance on any terms,” replied I, warmly shaking his hand, which he as warmly returned.

“I have broken through a resolution,” said Churchill, “for the very reason, I believe, which ought to have determined me to keep it.”

“What was your resolution?”

“Not to get acquainted with you.”

“With me! With our set of young men, I suppose you mean.”

“No, Mr Dunallan, with yourself.”

“And why so, Mr Churchill?”

“Ah, that is a long story. I shall tell it you another time.”

“Come and sup with me now.”

“I never sup out: but I shall go with you for half an hour.”

When we were alone, I asked his reason for wishing so particularly to avoid my acquaintance.

“Because,” replied he, “I know the superiority of your talents, and the influence you acquire over those with whom you associate, by the union of those talents with your temper and powers of pleasing. I dreaded you, Dunallan.”

“But why, Churchill? I am not conscious of having used my influence, whatever it is, to lead any one astray.”

“I am certain you never *intentionally* have,” replied he, “yet you do lead astray; and I feel that you would soon acquire an unaccountable power over me also, should my judgment yield to my affections. I do not know if I am right,” added he, “but



the selfish, cautious dread of receiving injury from you, has given place to the ardent, though perhaps rash, desire of attempting to rescue you from the influence of what I am convinced are very dangerous opinions."

'I urged him to explain himself.

"Forgive me," replied he, "if I remind you of the opinions you so eloquently advanced, and which were so rapturously received and imbibed by those who listened to you, on the first evening we met."

"And which you, with such superior talent refuted," replied I.

"My fate this evening," replied Churchill, "has shown whose talents are most superior. It was the goodness of my cause alone which gave me an advantage on that evening; and believe me, Dunallan, whenever you attempt to argue in favour of human virtue, and its value, and the 'vast conquests of human reason,' you will find that very inferior abilities, with some knowledge of the human heart, will be able to refute all you say. Why, Dunallan," continued he, "are you such an enemy to revelation?"

"Revelation!" repeated I, with disgust, "I am an enemy to every thing that debases the human mind. There are parts of what you call revelation which I admire as much as you can do; but I cannot—I have not tried—to believe what is contrary to reason, to probability, to common sense. Surely, Churchill, you cannot pretend to say that you have succeeded in subjecting that fine mind of yours to the belief, or to the supposition that the belief is necessary, of all the contradictions—all the absurd —"

"Stop, Dunallan," interrupted Churchill, "do not add to your future regret, by the abuse of that which I fervently hope may one day be to you, as it now is to me, I solemnly declare, in as far as a weak and perverted, though proud and cavilling, nature will suffer it to be,—the test by which I try every principle, every word, every action, every thought,—the light and guide of my soul, the foundation of all my hopes, and the support and consolation of my heart."

'I shall never forget, my dear Catharine, the tone of voice,



and the elevated expression of countenance which accompanied these words. I can understand now from whence they proceeded,—I could not then ; and when Churchill took leave, I felt bewildered in forming my judgment of his character. My conclusion, however, was, that early education had clouded his noble faculties, and now led him to view as dangerous whatever was contrary to prejudices which, from their connection with lofty and mysterious subjects, were calculated to engage a mind such as I supposed his to be ; yet his dread of the influence of others, proved to me that he felt the weakness of the ground on which he stood. I therefore determined to avoid combating those prejudices, which seemed to have their hold as much on his heart as on his imagination, but to attempt to lead him gradually to the beautiful, and I then thought irresistible, theories which filled my own mind. I soon found, however, that it was impossible to avoid entering into argument with Churchill respecting his opinions, because they in some degree pervaded every subject on which he conversed. In spite of this, I became every day more attached to him. I greatly disliked his religious sentiments, however, and laboured, both when with him, and when absent from him, to find arguments to overturn a system which seemed to unfit him for the world. I was perfectly sincere then in thinking my own system the right one, and in every thing but in complying with Churchill's desire to examine his opinions ; for some of them appeared to me so absurd and unreasonable, that I had not patience to hear him argue in their defence. I introduced the subject into our public debates ; as I expected, all at first joined me ; but Churchill stood firm, though alone. In a short time, however, to my grief and dismay, the friend at college whom I loved and esteemed next to Churchill, adopted all his notions. This friend, my dear Catharine, was Walderford. His talents, particularly his powers of reasoning, had been esteemed by us all as very superior. His adoption of Churchill's opinions made a great sensation amongst us, and even I then attempted to comprehend their system, and if possible, to reconcile it to reason—but in vain. I told Walderford so. He only smiled, and assured me that, while I worshipped human reason, there was



no room in my heart for the true God. I asked him, in the bitterness of sarcasm, "If the Being he worshipped was the God of fools only?"

"Even so," replied he, with perfect mildness, though he was naturally of a very warm temper,—“even so, Dunallan; His true worshippers must become fools in their own eyes, and perhaps in the eyes of others; they must lay aside the pride of reason, and their trust in its power, and subject their understandings to the teaching of Him who is the only source of truth.”

‘I shall not repeat our many arguments, my dear Catharine; I shall only give you an idea of the systems we each maintained. Mine was this: That the human soul is, when it enters life, perfectly innocent, and perfectly pure,—possessed of the germ of all those powers, in different degrees, which are afterwards to be devoted to good or evil, according to the will of the possessor—biassed, of course, by circumstances, example, or education. That the human will is perfectly free, and able to choose the path it may pursue; and that human virtue consists in preferring what is good, and is great in proportion to the obstacles it overcomes in making this choice. That the Supreme Being will at last reward those with everlasting happiness who attain at least to a greater degree of virtue than vice; as to what should become of those who did not, I had formed no opinion; for, respecting the declarations of Scripture on that point, I was, to say the least, completely sceptical. The founder of the Christian religion I regarded as ——. But indeed, dear Catharine, I will not risk the possibility of misleading your mind by entering into the thoughts I then presumptuously indulged on this most sacred subject. Suffice it to say, that, as a small part only of the doctrines of Christianity can be comprehended by the natural human understanding, to that part only I assented. I shall not mention the many absurd and irreverent speculations which were entertained on this subject by my companions and myself. The morality of the New Testament I greatly admired, though I thought many parts of it unfit for real life.

‘Churchill’s opinions will perhaps appear to you, as they then did to me, inconsistent with reason, and dishonourable to the



Divine Being. He believed that a strong bias to evil was inherent in human nature, and an incapacity to choose what is good. He argued from Scripture, and from facts. I argued against both, in defence of man's natural innocence. He considered human reason as utterly incapable of discovering truth with regard to the relation subsisting between us and our Creator, and equally incapable of judging of what was suitable for that Creator to require of his creatures. That a revelation to inform us of this was absolutely necessary; and that, when such a revelation was offered, and when we had investigated the truth of its claims to inspiration, with fairness, and upon proper principles, and found the proofs so complete as to convince our reason, which ought to judge here, we had only then to subject every power of our souls to the implicit reception of every word of this revelation; and when we could not comprehend, we ought to pray humbly, and believing firmly in its promises for greater degrees of light. And in this spirit alone, he said, could we understand the meaning of Scripture; and that, until we in some degree comprehended revelation, and felt its influence on our belief, and on our affections and conduct, our minds were ignorant of what real truth was, and in utter darkness;—we neither know ourselves, nor our present abject state, nor the high destination which we despised, nor the character of the Judge of the universe, nor, in a word, any thing.

‘These opinions were revolting, and disgusting to me in the extreme; but my arguments had no influence with either Walderford or Churchill; and as we could not agree, we resolved to avoid the subject, with this agreement, that our after lives should be the test of our principles. I observed Churchill, when we made this agreement, as he turned from me, raise his eyes to heaven, as if imploring power to prove the truth of his principles.

‘“My natural powers against your prayers, Churchill,” said I, in my usual tone of ridicule.

‘He smiled, but faintly, and a momentary paleness passed over his countenance.

‘“You frightened me, Dunallan,” replied he. “If you knew the goodness which you thus resist!”—he stopt, and only added,



“You shall not be without those prayers you so ignorantly despise.”

‘After this we seldom mentioned the subject; and for some months, I believe, I enjoyed as uninterrupted happiness as any rational being, in my then state of ignorance of the real source of enjoyment, could; and I can understand the feelings of those who, disgusted with a chilling, and corrupting, and jarring world, and having no knowledge of happiness independent of what that world can give, look back on the time spent at college as the happiest of their lives. Walderford, Churchill, and I, were seldom asunder, and our affection daily increased. They both rather shunned the subject of religion, but declared their belief that I should one day think as they did. I believed them sincere, and by turns pitied and envied their delusions, particularly Churchill’s, who appeared to derive a happiness from his religion which astonished me; he seemed to bring it into every thing. We were all enthusiastic admirers of nature; but he seemed to enjoy a pleasure so exquisite in beholding its beauties, that he had no language in which to express his feelings; or rather, he seemed to enjoy an internal delight, the source of which I did not comprehend,—for to me then, beautiful as nature appeared, its beauty made me sad. The smallest flower seemed a source of the sweetest pleasure to Churchill. “How beautiful is *His* penciling!” he would exclaim, and then seemed to regard it with a glow of rapture. Walderford seemed to understand him, but did not appear so happy.

“Ah, Walderford!” said I once to him, “the disciple cannot command the sweet delusions of the master; your new religion has not added to your happiness.”

“I confess,” replied he, “I am not yet so happy as Churchill. All his difficulties are nearly overcome, I am still combating with mine, and most of all with my cherished pride of reason; but Dunallan, you have no cause to doubt my word, and I declare to you before Heaven, that, from what even I know and feel of the influence of true religion, the mind, however informed on other subjects, while without it, is still deficient in even an idea of what real peace, or truth, or happiness is.”

‘I wondered at the strength of his delusion, for he often



seemed absent and uncomfortable ; but he turned from all I said with the most impenetrable indifference.

‘ At last the dreaded time of our separation arrived. Walderford was called home to his father, who was ill ; Churchill had the offer of a curacy in the west of England ; and I, at my father’s desire, was to pay a visit to a friend of his, who had spent a long life in the service of the public, as my father said, and knew men as they really were.

‘ My father’s ambition was, that I should distinguish myself in a political life. This had been my own also ; but the deep distress I experienced in parting from my friends, particularly my beloved Churchill, overcame ambition for the time, and every thing else. Churchill discovered a degree of grief also at parting from me, which I had not thought any earthly deprivation could have cost him.

‘ My father’s friend, to whose seat near London I immediately repaired on leaving college, was a man of the most insinuating manners, and immediately acquired great influence over my mind. He found me very ignorant of the world as it really is, and told me so. He advised me to make human nature, as it appeared in society, my peculiar study,—adding, that the experience of another could not make me acquainted with it, and that, with my present notions of it, I need not attempt to enter on a political life. I asked his advice as to where I should seek this indispensable knowledge. But this will not interest you, my dearest Catharine. I will only tell you, that he warned me against attaching myself to any party,—an advice I had often received from Churchill also while at college,—and to use my own observation and reason in judging. Lord Coverdale (that was the name of my father’s friend), also directed me to books fitted to promote my pursuits ; and, full of the determination to find something to examine in every person I met in every society, I set off for my father’s. I had not seen him since my mother’s death, and a very short residence at home proved to me that it no longer could have any attraction for me. Mrs Oswald has, I believe, informed you, my dear Catharine, of the unhappy view of human nature which this visit at home was calculated to give me, in a



way in which the lesson was indeed impressive. I was most wretched while witnessing it; and when I found that my influence with my father could not overcome that of one of the worst of beings, and that I had no hope of any change, I determined to seek that happiness elsewhere, which I could no longer enjoy under my father's roof. I went to London and spent most of my time at my brother-in-law, Harcourt's, where I had an opportunity of finding, as I supposed, all I was in search of,—human nature in every variety of character. I studied the subject for some time without involving myself in any of the various pursuits and follies of the different men I associated with. This arose less from any previous resolution, than from their want of congeniality with my taste. As to women, those with whom my sister was most intimate had few attractions for me. I admired their beauty and grace, but they all resembled each other so closely in character and trifling pursuits, that I soon lost all curiosity and desire to form new acquaintances among them. Harcourt laughed at my insensibility on this subject, and tried every means, some of which were highly improper, to do it away, but in vain. My taste was really too refined to tolerate open vice, and my morals still too pure to contemplate without disgust many scenes to which he attempted to introduce me. Harcourt had reasons for wishing me to become as vicious as I afterwards discovered himself to be. He introduced me to all sorts of society. Young and inexperienced as I was, and having been assured also by Lord Coverdale, that I had formed an idea of the world which was entirely visionary, I only thought when I heard or saw what shocked me, that I was discovering what was real. Churchill, to whom I wrote every thing which interested me, at last ventured to caution me against being led by Harcourt. "The world you describe," said he in a letter to me, "is worse than *even I* supposed it. Can you breathe such an atmosphere, Dunallan, and still believe in the purity of human nature?" I replied, that large and corrupted towns were not the scenes in which to judge of human nature fairly, though those who aspired to governing their fellow-men ought to know them in all varieties of conditions, and that I should not yield to the disgust I felt while my own heart was innocent (for so I then



ignorantly thought it), and while I remembered him. I acknowledged, however, that I did begin to feel less ambition to distinguish myself in the busier scenes of life. After this I gradually withdrew from Harcourt, to whose character my eyes were at last in some degree opened. He perceived this, and would probably have lost all influence over me, had he not at that time found means to become intimate in the house of a man of high rank, the inmates of which possessed the most fascinating manners. This person was leader of a particular party in politics, so markedly, that my political friend, Lord Coverdale, had warned me against forming an intimacy in his family, unless I meant myself to be considered as attached to the same party. Harcourt brought me an invitation to a select party at this house, expressed in such flattering terms, that I felt it would be very marked in me to decline it. I informed Lord Coverdale of my intention to accept of this invitation. He seemed vexed and displeased, and asked me if I did not know that it was, in a refined way, one of the most immoral houses in the country. He had not hitherto paid much regard to my morals; I therefore was convinced by this appearance of anxiety about them now, that a suspicion I had some time entertained was just (for I now did begin to see through men),—this was, that Lord Coverdale, with all his professions of dislike to party, was himself in heart strongly opposed to that party of which Harcourt's friend was a leader. This conviction disgusted me, and I therefore continued politely firm in declaring my intention to visit at this house. When Lord Coverdale saw I was determined, he immediately overcame his vexation, and in the most cordial manner advised me to study the characters I should meet at Lord ——'s, as they were, in talent at least, some of the first men in the country. "And," added he, laughing, "the women too, whom you will meet there, are the first in female talent also."

‘The preparation, and dread of danger, with which I commenced my acquaintance at Lord ——'s, made me, I believe, the more easily deceived. I had been assured that he and his friends courted all young men of fortune, in order to attach them to their party in politics. I expected this courting, and



was prepared to resist, but I was disappointed. I was indeed received with very flattering distinctions; but this I immediately saw arose from the character given of me by some of my numerous college friends, who, I found, were intimate in this family.

‘Talents, wit, great acquirements of every kind, genius, taste, scientific knowledge, a taste for the fine arts, superior artists themselves; in short, whatever was calculated to please or inform, gained admittance here. Dulness and ignorance only were excluded; and in the family, and those they admitted to closest intimacy, the most fascinating and dignified polish was added to the most perfect ease of manners. I soon found that, to gain the esteem of those around me it was necessary I should exert all the talents I possessed. This stimulus to my natural desire of distinction was delightful to me; and I found in this society a charm which no other had afforded me.

‘In a short time I found that I had not exerted myself in vain. I saw that I was regarded with a degree of respect which flattered my pride, by all whom I met at this house, comprising many of my own former friends, and also many men of high character for talents in almost every department of the higher classes of society. I felt that something superior was expected from me, and I laboured not to disappoint their expectation. The women also, whom I met here, inspired me with an admiration which I had not till then felt for any of the sex; and for one lady, I dared scarcely to myself confess the nature of my feelings. She resided almost constantly with this family, with whom she was connected by marriage. Her husband was also frequently an inmate in the house. I see you start, Catharine, and you must prepare yourself now to hear, that the human heart can deceive itself to a degree of which I know you have no idea. As this lady is still received into, and thought an ornament to many societies, I do not feel myself at liberty to disclose her name even to you, my dear Catharine. I shall, therefore, conceal her name, under that of Aspasia. Aspasia, then, was at least fifteen years older than I was, but still very beautiful, though quite unindebted to art. There was also in her countenance an expression of mind and soul, which captivated me the first moment I beheld her. I ought here to inform my



dearest of friends, that this delusion is long past, and that now the idea of Aspasia is to me the most painful that ever visits my recollection. Aspasia's person was also strikingly graceful. Her talents were very superior, and she seemed devoted to their cultivation. She was singularly well informed on almost every subject, her language was beautifully pure, and her voice harmony itself. On my first introduction to her, she seemed pleased, and entered into conversation with me; but for some time afterwards she took scarcely any notice of me. She was, however, among the many attractions of this house, that which induced me to forego every other consideration; such as being considered a party man in politics, and a free thinker and libertine, at least in principle, of which I found all the intimate friends of this family were suspected. But no remonstrances of Lord Coverdale's, or even of Churchill's, who from the first disliked my description of this family, could prevail on me to give up a society where all I heard and saw was calculated to delight me, and where I constantly met Aspasia. The truth was, that I could perceive none of those dangers with which my friends threatened me; and there appeared no wish to deceive: on the contrary, the manners of those persons who were most esteemed and admired, were singularly open and simple; and their extreme polish seemed to be the consequence of that superior information, and that elegance and refinement of taste, which were here cultivated as the highest ornaments of human nature. Aspasia was particularly simple in her manner; but her every motion was grace, and every tone of her voice music itself. She was the idol of the scene. Her talents, her perseverance in their cultivation, her perfect ease of manner, her brilliant fancy, and charming powers of conversation, rendered her the delight of the wise and the grave, almost as much as she was the idol of the young and ardent. Her beauty, and grace, and gently playful gaiety, threw an illusive charm around her, which blinded the young and inexperienced to the real tendency both of her manners and conversation. I was one of this number. So perverted were my ideas, by what I heard and saw around me, that I was insensible to the impropriety of a married woman thus receiving, without any apparent dis-



pleasure, the marked homage of many young men of very dissipated character ; and indeed of almost every man who approached her, although those who were more experienced, assumed the mask of friendship, while the young and less guarded openly betrayed their sentiments.

‘But, my dear Catharine, I do not mean to lead you through the scenes which debased my mind at that time. I imbibed, without examination or suspicion, the opinions which I heard constantly repeated in this society, where superior talents seemed to be considered as an excuse for uncontrolled passions ; or rather, they were considered as inseparable ; and strict virtue and morality were only to be expected from the naturally dull and phlegmatic. I gradually learned to despise those virtues most necessary to the happiness of mankind ; or, at least, to consider them as fit only for the useful drudges in society. Women even were included in this opinion ; and those crimes by which they destroy the most sacred bonds of society, I considered even too severely punished by their being rejected from that society.

‘My ardent wishes and unwearied efforts to render myself agreeable to Aspasia at last succeeded ; she treated me with marked preference, and I was intoxicated by the dangerous distinction. The family had gone to a beautiful residence in the country ; and so complete was the freedom of every inmate or visitor, that our particular friendship seemed scarcely observed, unless by my numerous rivals. I now thought of nothing but Aspasia ; she was equally devoted to me.

‘I look back with astonishment, and the deepest shame, to that part of my life ; and I feel that you, Catharine, must be disgusted with the picture I have drawn ; but I wish to show you the state of delusion at which I had arrived, that you may be convinced of the absolute necessity of other principles than those with which I began life. So completely blinded was I then, that, without really deserving the imputation of hypocrisy, I could talk of virtue whilst I trampled on its plainest laws. I could talk of honour, as many men constantly do, while acting a part the most base. I could talk loudly of the good of society, and of the corruption which disgraced those who gave it laws, whilst I was violating its most sacred obligations.



‘We returned to town in a few months. Aspasia was still my idol ; but I began at intervals to see things as they really were. I, however, hated the light which showed me the real nature of that course on which I had entered. I became gloomy and sad. Aspasia alone had still the power to charm. I recalled my former opinions of the powers of human nature, of reason, of high resolutions, with feelings of bitter ridicule, and raised my thoughts in rebellious murmurs to that Being, who plants the intolerable stings of remorse in the same heart, whose passions are too strong to be restrained by the weakness of reason.

‘I had neglected to write to Walderford, and even to Churchill, yet they both continued to write to me with the utmost kindness. But their letters gave me little pleasure, for they seemed still happy in those delusions which had charmed them in their days of innocence and hope, while I had discovered the fallacy of mine. I felt miserable, and imagined that ignorance of the world only could make any man hope to find happiness in it. I was conscious I possessed, in a great degree, all it could give. I knew at least that I was regarded as the most fortunate amongst those with whom I associated. The party to whom I was considered to belong, spoke in exaggerated terms of my character. I had succeeded in winning the woman I loved. I was received in society, and by other women, with that flattering distinction with which young men, with high worldly prospects, are usually received : yet I wearied of it all ; nor could I conceive that anything but ignorance made Walderford happy, living in a retired situation, with an old and peevish father, and some friends of that father, as disagreeable as himself ; or Churchill, doing the tiresome duties of a parish priest, in an obscure corner of the country, with no society but a few ignorant fox-hunters or country gentlemen. I wrote to them as I felt, that, if they were really happy, it was only the happiness of ignorance, to which I could not now return. Walderford, in his reply to my letter, did not spare me. He ridiculed the idea of my being wearied of existence, and called it the unmanly and contemptible cant of the day ; reminded me of our different principles, and laboured to show me, even from my own confession, that mine were erroneous and useless. I did not again



write to him at that time. My heart was too wretched, and my temper had become too irritable, to bear the least harshness without resentment. Churchill made the human heart his study, and he knew it better. He wrote to me more kindly and more mildly than ever. He agreed in all I said of the disappointing nature of all that is called pleasure. He invited me to go to him, and in his glowing language, described the beauty of the scenery around him. He said, "that its calm would restore a mind like mine to its natural tone, which had been lost from constant excitement and disappointment; and enable me to see the future through a less gloomy medium, and the fair prospects life still held out for me." I loved Churchill more than ever on receiving this letter. I looked on him as superior to common humanity, and longed to go to him. The remembrance of the days we had formerly spent together, filled my heart with sensations, though sad, yet sweeter than any I now experienced, and I determined to go to him immediately.

'I went to Aspasia to impart my intention to her. She was in despair—she knew Churchill's character from me; and, when I would have taken leave of her, she said, in a voice scarcely articulate, "Farewell, then, Dunallan, farewell for ever!" and fainted. I could not leave her—I promised whatever she desired—but I felt the thralldom.

'I wrote Churchill that I could not go to him; and again returned to the same round of insipid engagements, and hopeless pursuit of excitement as before.

'One night, on returning late to my lodgings, a servant informed me that a gentleman from the country had called on me, and had waited several hours for my return; that he could remain no longer, but would again call in the morning.

"Did the gentleman not leave his name?" asked I.

"I did not hear distinctly what he said, Sir," replied the man, who had forgotten it; "but he seemed much disappointed at missing you, Sir. He is a tall, handsome, young gentleman, but looks sickly, and was dressed like a clergyman."

"Churchill!" exclaimed I.

"Yes," replied the servant, "that was the name, Sir."



“Where is he to be found?” asked I, hurrying back to the door.

“He did not say, Sir,”

‘I was obliged to remain that night without seeing him; but I could not sleep; indeed I seldom slept peacefully at this period of my life.

‘In the morning I watched for my friend in a state of emotion, which convinced me that he was still dearer to me, however I might be entangled in the labyrinth of sin into which I had entered, than Aspasia or all the world. At last he came—so kind, so mild, so wise, so pure, his conversation seemed to my heart like the dawn of the morning, after a night of unhappy dreams. He told me that my last letter had led him to suspect that I had got myself involved in some connection which was become disagreeable to me, but which I could not break off; and that he had come to town in the hope, that two heads, and one of them happily free, at least on this subject, might be better able than one, to discover some honourable way of escape. “If I am mistaken, dear Dunallan,” added he, “tell me so; I do not wish to intrude myself into your confidence.”

“Intrude, my dearest, kindest Churchill!” exclaimed I, “your interest in me—your friendship, is more valuable to me than all the world contains besides. You shall know my whole heart, Churchill, though I am conscious that in your eyes, I shall appear a criminal of the first rank.”

“I hope not, dear Dunallan; but if you have erred, the change in your looks prove, that, at least, you have been unhappy in doing so. You must retrace your steps again, my friend, till you return to that state of mind in which you were when we last parted.”

“Impossible, Churchill!”

“Impossible! Why so? Has one year, one short year, at your age, been so fatal to you, Dunallan! Tell me, are you married? And is the object unworthy—unloved?”

“No, Churchill, thank Heaven!”

“Thank Heaven!” repeated Churchill, his countenance expressing the greatest joy.

‘I told him all that had happened to me. His countenance,



on our first meeting, had expressed the most anxious concern on observing the melancholy of my looks, which had led him to fear that I had taken some irremediable step. As I proceeded he listened with the deepest attention, but his eyes were fixed upon the ground: and though I wished to read his countenance, he commanded it so perfectly, that I could not discover the impression which my recital had made. When I had finished, he did not express any blame; he only sympathised in my feelings of regret at having involved myself and Aspasia in a connection fraught with danger to her reputation, and unhappiness, in every way, to both of us. At last he exclaimed,

“Now, dear Dunallan, let us form some plan to put an end for ever to this unhappy affair.”

“How can I, Churchill? Can I make the woman miserable who has sacrificed every thing for me? And such a woman!”

He paused, looking earnestly at me. “Are there any political engagements between you and that party amongst whom you meet Aspasia?”

“Not exactly,” replied I, “I have supported their political opinions with the greatest openness. I have tacitly suffered myself to be talked of as one who, they expect, will on future occasions support them. I have made no promise, but should be regarded as having left my party should I not realize those expectations: however, this is of little consequence, as I really in general agree with them in political opinions.”

“You have no present engagements with them?”

“None.”

“Then, Dunallan, if you value peace of mind,—reputation; if you value any thing that is called virtue, leave Aspasia. You do not, you cannot see the destructive course on which you have entered, nor its tendency to hurt your every hope, even in this world, until time and absence dispel the delusion which binds you.”

“Churchill,” replied I, “I cannot leave Aspasia. You do not know her; my ungrateful desertion would shorten her existence. At least our separation must be gradual,” added I, on seeing the expression of grief and disappointment which now clouded Churchill’s countenance. He shook his head: after a pause,



‘ “ You formerly believed in the immortality of the soul, Dunallan,” said he.

‘ “ I believe in it still, Churchill.”

‘ “ And yet you fear inflicting a short-lived pain on this idol of your affections. Is her soul less immortal?”

‘ “ Aspasia does not feel it, if she is in error,” replied I; “ her opinions on these subjects, her real opinions, are different from yours, Churchill.”

‘ “ And from yours, Dunallan?”

‘ “ I do not say they are; but we shall not agree on these subjects; you know, my dear friend, we never did.”

‘ “ Oh Dunallan!” exclaimed he, clasping his hands with the most energetic emotion, “ would to God that we did agree on those most momentous subjects! Would to God that the Being who formed you so capable of honouring him, and of winning others to honour him, would dispel the cloud in which you have involved your noble faculties! But will you not at least return with me for a few weeks? You promised to visit me; my claim is superior to Aspasia’s;—she surely would suffer a claim of friendship if she is so noble minded—so generous.”

‘ “ Yes, I will, Churchill, on one condition—that you see Aspasia, and do both her and your friend justice; she is not the worthless being you suppose.”

‘ “ See her!” interrupted Churchill, with an appearance of greater severity than I had ever before seen in him; “ why should I see her? Were she sensible of her degradation,” added he, in a gentler tone of voice, “ were she an outcast from society, and forsaken by all the world; were she the lowest of human beings, and a penitent, I should feel it a delightful duty to make every effort to restore her to that peace which is offered to the humble and broken spirit; but of what use could I hope to be, and what other motive ought to induce me to see a prosperous, admired, deluded adulteress ——.”

‘ “ Stop!” exclaimed I,—“ you abuse my confidence.”

‘ “ Forgive me, Dunallan,” replied he, “ I am too warm; but there were no conditions when you promised me this visit.”

‘ “ No, Churchill; and I shall give up this, and go with you when you please.”



‘ “ I go to-morrow,” replied he, joyfully.

‘ “ What ! so soon ?”

‘ “ Yes, my profession binds me to home : I ought not to leave it a moment I can avoid.”

‘ “ I am ready,” said I.

‘ “ You will write to Aspasia ?”

‘ “ No, I must see her.”

‘ He looked disappointed, and entreated me to write ; but I could not consent to leaving her without saying adieu in person.

‘ Churchill and I remained together till after dinner, when he said he must leave me, to fulfil an engagement with a friend whom he had accidentally met the evening before,—to preach for him on this evening.

‘ “ Preach !” exclaimed I, “ it is not Sunday.”

‘ “ No,” replied he, smiling ; “ but my friend thinks it useful to his people, particularly to those in the lower classes, to lecture once every week as well as on Sunday.”

‘ “ Pho, Churchill,” replied I, “ how can you spend your noble eloquence on a set of old women and greasy mechanics ? They will not understand you.”

‘ “ You forget, Dunallan, whose servant I am, and upon whom He bestowed his precious divine instructions. Oh, that you knew Him, my poor friend, and the pleasures of his service !”

‘ Churchill went to his poor people, and I was, in the meantime, to go and take leave of Aspasia. We were to meet again in two hours at my lodgings, from whence we proposed setting off early in the morning.

‘ When I entered the library at Lord ——’s, where I usually found Aspasia, and where we generally spent some time in conversation before we joined the party assembled in the drawing-room, I did not find her. I proceeded to a small boudoir, where she sometimes chose to meet me. She was not there either. I began to fear she was displeased at my not having seen her that day. I joined the party in the drawing-room, and, glancing around whilst I paid my compliments to the many friends who welcomed me with their usual flattering kindness, I perceived Aspasia seated apart, and apparently so deeply absorbed in a book as not to observe my entrance. I was soon beside her.



‘ “ Your friends must be jealous of that book, Aspasia.”

‘ “ My friends must surely wish me to be amused and instructed,” replied she, looking coldly at me, and again bending over the book. She was looking very lovely. She seemed unhappy, and the expression of sadness particularly suited her style of features.

‘ “ I must not, then, disturb your enjoyment, Aspasia. I must pass all this day without enjoying your conversation.”

‘ She made no reply. I had never seen her thus before. I attempted several times to draw her into conversation, but in vain. At last she rose and left the room. I soon took my leave, and went in quest of her. I found her in the library. She caught up a book when I entered, but I saw she had not been reading, and I perceived she was in tears. I entreated her to tell me how I had offended her, and why she regarded me with such looks of coldness and displeasure. She answered, that I was mistaken in supposing she was offended, and that she was unconscious of how she looked.

‘ I could wish to describe to my dear Catharine the scene that followed, because I might then, perhaps, appear less inexcusably criminal in her eyes; but even in that hope I will not indulge myself, in thus far trying to palliate what I ought to wish her, and every one, to condemn and detest.

‘ Aspasia’s power over me was so great, that, by arts which I will not describe, she again induced me to promise that I should not go with Churchill.

‘ It was very late when I returned to my lodgings. I wished to avoid seeing Churchill. I meant to write to him, and to leave the house in the morning before he left his room. I did feel the degradation of shrinking from the sight of any man, and there was not another in the universe to whom I then would even have acknowledged myself guilty; but my pride never shrunk from avowing my errors to Churchill. It was my consciousness of ingratitude—my relinquishing his invaluable friendship, from a cause in his eyes so guilty, so contemptible. It is possible to wish ardently, and yet be incapable of abandoning vice. This was my case. I entered my own house with the feelings of a criminal, and could have wished the earth to cover



me when I heard Churchill's voice as he hastened to meet me. I involuntarily stood still. He approached, and when he saw me he only sighed or rather groaned, and exclaimed, "It is as I feared!"

"Good night, then, Churchill," said I; "or rather farewell." I entreated him to leave me. "Nothing you can say can now make me change," said I. "The die is cast,—I must abide by the consequences. The loss of your friendship I expect, Churchill; I deserve to lose it."

Churchill attempted to speak, but his emotion overpowered him. He look at me with an expression almost of agony. At last, grasping my hand, "You do not know me, Dunallan. I pity you from my inmost soul. The chains of vice gall and torture you a thousand times more than breaking them would: But I cannot convince you of this." He then left me. I could not go to bed, or sleep. I watched in misery, until at an early hour in the morning, I heard the carriage stop which was to convey my best and truest friend from me perhaps for ever. I determined to see him once more, and went to his apartment. I found him looking calm and serene.

"Farewell, dear Dunallan," said he, with even more than his usual kindness. "I shall write you whenever I get home. Write to me, I entreat you; write with your former confidence,—forget what has passed since I came to town."

I observed that there was no appearance of his having been in bed.

"Churchill," said I, "have you not slept?"

"No, I could not sleep."

"Nor have you been in bed."

"No, Dunallan; I could only think of you, and pray for you." He clasped me affectionately to his heart, and hurried away.

I felt, when I heard his carriage drive rapidly from my door, as if I had been abandoned to evil. Churchill had succeeded, if not in reclaiming me from vice, at least in fixing a dagger in my conscience. I endeavoured to overcome or forget it. I endeavoured to banish thought, but in vain. If I did succeed at times, it returned loaded with more gloom than ever. Aspasia



tried every effort to soothe and amuse me; and when I was with her, I sometimes forgot that I was unhappy, and her harp and her voice charmed the gloom away. But at other times when I saw her in the pride of beauty, and of talents, and of charms, without apparently one feeling of disquiet, Churchill's words would return to my memory—"A prosperous, admired, and deluded adulteress!" and the odiousness of the character for a moment dispelled her charms, but only for a moment. I still loved her, but my love was mingled with the most wretched feelings. I felt a gloomy pleasure in indulging to the utmost the harassing thoughts which filled my soul. I have gazed at Aspasia while she touched her harp and sung to me; I have entreated her to continue to sing, that I might still gaze;—and while she sought to charm me, and I admired the perfection of her beauty, my imagination pictured the fair forehead—the blue veins in the transparent temples and cheek—the eyes so full of soul, so softly beautiful, with their dark fringes—the mouth so perfect—the whole form so delicate, so lovely;—I have pictured them all in the grave—cold, stiff, blackened—food for the worm, mouldering to decay.

Churchill wrote frequently to me, and I still loved his letters, and longed for them. I wrote to him also, and fully described the gloomy state of my feelings. He strongly recommended occupation. I believe he feared the effect on my intellects, from the gloomy feelings I indulged. By his advice I got into parliament. My father was delighted with my wishing it, and supplied me amply with money, while the party amongst whom I lived, easily pointed out a situation where that would procure my election. In this advice Churchill showed his usual wisdom. The manly sentiments, the universal information, the patriotism which I at least heard expressed, formed a painful contrast with the idle, useless, unmanly life in which I indulged. I began again to feel some interest in existence. I had found a motive for exertion strong enough to excite me to it. I read, and studied, and devoted myself to politics with an eagerness that delighted my party. I spoke, and, as a young man, was listened to with indulgence, and even applause. Elated with success, I willingly undertook to be the mouth of the party in bringing



forward a motion on a subject which it was expected would excite much discussion. I introduced this motion with a speech which I had taken every pains to prepare. It was received with all the approbation my most sanguine friends had led me to hope; and I was flattered by one of the most highly distinguished members on the opposite side rising to answer it. He complimented me on my ingenuity and eloquence, but soon convinced even myself that I knew and had studied but one side of the argument. I turned to a friend near me, "We are lost," whispered I. "Lost! why?—do not fear." He rose immediately, and gave so different a gloss to all I had said, that my opponent seemed to have been arguing all along against a shadow of his own creating; and after many speeches had involved the matter in utter confusion, the debate was adjourned to the next day. Frequent scenes such as this disgusted me with politics. My sensibility to all that was wrong in others seemed to increase with my insensibility to my own faults; and the corruption and subjection of every principle to party politics, and the worthlessness of men in power, or seeking power, were the subjects of many keen invectives in my letters to Churchill. In one of his to me about this time, after replying to all my observations on human character, with his usual want of surprise at all I had said, and asking me if it did not prove those very principles to be true which I had at college combated as throwing a degrading stigma on human nature, he mentioned at the end of his letter, that he had been confined to the house for a fortnight by a severe cold. His regret at not being able to fulfil his pastoral duties during that period, was expressed in terms which I thought, from their extreme warmth, a part of that enthusiasm which I had learned to disregard in him, and passed it over with perfect indifference. I read with more anxiety what he said respecting his health, but understood that he was now recovered. He entered, however, in this letter, more warmly into his own principles than he had ever before done to me; but I hurried with indifference over this part of what he had written, and never again thought of it. A few weeks after this, on returning to Aspasia one evening after a political dinner, she held a letter up before me.



“What am I to think of this?” said she, playfully: “A letter from a lady!”

“For me?” asked I, holding out my hand for it.

“Yes,” replied she, still holding it from me.

“It was addressed in a small female hand.

“I do not know the writing, Aspasia.”

“Ah! then, shall I open it?”

“Certainly; if you choose.”

“You seem so perfectly innocent,” replied she, “that I have lost all curiosity;” and she gave me the letter.

“I broke the seal. The writing within was Churchill’s, but so changed! The truth flashed upon me. “Churchill is gone!” exclaimed I, in agony.

“Oh no! you may be mistaken; let me read this letter,” said Aspasia, laying her hand upon it,

“You!” exclaimed I, snatching it as from pollution.

“I with difficulty read the few first lines.

“I fear I have not sufficiently prepared you, Dunallan, for our long—our last separation.” I could read no farther. I looked in dread to the conclusion of the letter. It ended with his farewell. “Farewell, my dearest of friends; before you receive this I shall probably know that state where all become silent. Could I return to convince you of the truth; Oh Dunallan! thoughts of you cloud my soul unspeakably more, the more real and near an immortal state approaches. Would to God I could see you once more!”

“It may be possible!” exclaimed I, rushing past Aspasia, who stood watching my perturbed gestures.

“Where do you fly to, Edward?” exclaimed she, seizing my arm.

“I flung her from me, and hurried, almost distracted, to my lodgings.

“In a few minutes I was on the road to Churchill’s. The horses flew along as rapidly as possible; yet I urged on the men with a vehemence that seemed to terrify my servant, whom I had ordered to accompany me, without telling him the cause. I told him, and the poor fellow’s grief was so great as to attract my notice, even at that moment. He had been with me ever



since I went to college ; and, like every one else, loved Churchill with a warmth which no other being excited.

‘I shall not describe my misery during this journey, my dearest Catharine. I travelled on in this wretched state with all the rapidity possible, till near sunset on the second day, when we arrived at the village near Churchill’s residence. I stopt to inquire the way to it ; an old man approached the carriage, and putting his head close to the window, asked in a respectful but melancholy tone of voice, if I had meant to go there ; “for perhaps you do not know, Sir, the family are in great distress.”

‘I could not speak ; my servant asked, “Is Mr Churchill gone ?”

‘“No ; but ——”

‘I got out of the carriage, and following the old man’s direction, soon reached a house at a short distance. A number of people stood round the gate, and some near the house, their countenances expressive of the deepest sorrow and anxiety. I hurried through them ; a respectable-looking elderly woman stood at the entrance into the house, and answered in a low and distressed voice, the inquiries of the people. I listened. “Mr Churchill is no better,” I heard her say. I told her who I was, and asked if I could be admitted to see him.

‘She looked at me with surprise, and then conducted me into a small parlour near the door, where, in a short time, a youth came to me who resembled Churchill, but whom grief seemed to render unable to speak. He motioned me to follow him, and we entered the room where my friend lay, pale and emaciated, but his countenance expressive of the elevation and peace which reigned within. I stood still and gazed at him for a moment. He smiled, and held out his hand to me.

‘“Be composed, dear Dunallan, I have much to say to you. I entreat you, do not rob me of the little strength left me by exciting any emotion. Will you leave us for a short time, my dear mother ?” said he to a lady who sat by his bed.

‘She left the room accompanied by the youth. Churchill looked after them, and sighed deeply, “My poor mother !”

‘I entreated him to prove to me that I had not lost his



friendship, by suffering me, if possible, to do away any thing with regard to his mother which could excite his anxiety.

‘He shook his head. “No human power can do away what I dread her affection will suffer at my death, Dunallan; but no more of this.” He attempted to regain his composure, but could not; and when I saw him moved, I could no longer control my grief, and throwing myself on his bed, gave vent to the agony I endured. Churchill put his arm around me, and pressed me affectionately to him. For a short time neither of us spoke; at last Churchill said, in a low calm voice,

“Look, Dunallan, at that scene!”

‘I raised my head, and turned to where he pointed; it was to the window opposite his bed, from whence was seen a bright and glorious sunset.

“Well Churchill,” replied I, turning from it, “I see it, and I hate its beams.”

‘He sighed deeply. “You hate all light, Dunallan; you fly from it, and in flying from it, you fly from the only source of happiness; for a mind in darkness must be a wretched one. My friend, will you never believe me?”

“I do believe you, Churchill. I do believe that a dark, and gloomy, and guilty mind must be wretched. I must believe it, because I feel it; but you never knew it, Churchill. You may love that light which you yourself resemble. Your ‘path hath shone,’ in the language of your Scriptures, ‘brighter and brighter to the perfect day,’ and must, like that sun, set in glory, without knowing the misery of guilt, or the impossibility of returning from it.”

“Do you really think me so perfect, Dunallan?”

“I do from my soul, Churchill. *You* surely have no fears—no dread. If there is a God, he must reward a life like yours with the purest bliss.”

“Stop, my friend, you shock me!” exclaimed Churchill, “let me tell you why I have no fear—no dread—for my soul is in perfect peace, not as you suppose from a consciousness of innocence. Had I nothing but that, or even the highest degree of perfection to which any human being ever attained, I should not feel myself in a state to enter the presence of that Being



whose character is described in revelation. Our ideas of perfection, my dear Dunallan, are miserably low and erroneous. We form them from comparing human beings with human beings, not from comparing our hearts and lives with those pure laws which revelation teaches are the only standard of perfection. To that standard which reaches the thoughts and motives of the inmost recesses of the soul, no being ever attained. My heart and life, my dear Dunallan, cannot bear to be tried by that standard, and from such a trial I should shrink without a ray of hope. No heart, no life can bear it, but His who descended from heaven, and took our nature, that He might in our place fulfil, in heart and life, every precept of that all-perfect law. He it is, Dunallan—He who offers His salvation to you—to me—to all who ask it—who, while on our earth, used this touching style of reproach: ‘Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.’ He it is in whom is all my trust—all my hopes of happiness, and of complete freedom from every taint of moral impurity. I long to know that state, Dunallan. I long to put off this weak, sinful, dark mortality, which separates my soul from Him who is near me, and around me, and within me: Him, whom having not seen I love, and feel a joy in loving that is unspeakable!” He seemed lost in his own feelings, and his fine countenance looked more than human.

““Can this be delusion!” thought I, as I gazed at him. He soon recollected himself.

““Dunallan,” said he “do you still admire the morality of the New Testament?”

““I do, Churchill.”

““And His character who is there described?”

““Most assuredly I do.”

““Then, Dunallan, answer me candidly, why are you not a Christian?”

“I hesitated. “I do not say, Churchill, that I am not a Christian; but indeed, if the morality of the New Testament is necessary to being one, I may fairly own, that to me it is impracticable.”

““It is necessary, my friend, but it is so as an effect: the great end of Christianity is to purify the heart, to renovate the



powers of the soul, and to give a new principle of life; but we must believe in Him who is the source of this principle of life; we must come to Him to receive it, before we can obey the pure precepts of Christianity; just (as He himself illustrates the subject) as the branch must receive nourishment from the vine before it can produce fruit. If you really believe in Him, you must love Him; and if you love, you will, you must obey; but the love and obedience are both His gifts."

"My dear Churchill," replied I, "I wish from my inmost soul I could comprehend you, but I do not—I cannot—and you are exhausted" (for a hectic flush glowed on his cheek, and he spoke with difficulty). "Spare yourself, my dearest friend—just prescribe to me:—I promise to do whatever you desire me, if a being so weak dare promise. I shall not return to Aspasia—that charm is, I hope, broken for ever." He pressed my hand in his with affectionate warmth.

"Dear Dunallan, I trust implicitly in every promise you make at this moment. You remove the only real grief which imbittered my last moments. Promise me also to read this volume," added he, laying his hand on a Bible which lay on his bed, "promise to read it with attention. I have constantly thought of you while reading it, ever since I knew you, Dunallan:—You will find that I have attempted to answer those objections which I supposed might arise in your mind." The book was interleaved and full of his writing.

"What unwearied friendship!" exclaimed I. "Oh Churchill, what will life be without it!"

He was moved, but struggled to suppress his emotion. I felt an indescribable desolation of heart.

"One duty I must remind you of," said Churchill, after a short pause. "Poor Aspasia!" I gazed at him—he continued, looking stedfastly but mildly at me. "You ought not in reality—in justice, to regard her with any feelings but those of pity. Your education, my friend, made it impossible for you to be so guilty without remorse and misery. Aspasia seems to be insensible to the nature of her crime. Her mind appears to be in utter darkness—and her heart follows the bent of its passions, without any check from a conscience in which there seems to



be no light,—at least this is your description of her, Dunallan; if it is just, I fear there is little hope of reaching that conscience, while she is surrounded by the illusions of flattery;—but when her day of adversity comes, my dear Dunallan, remember that her soul too is immortal; and that as you have assisted in drawing her into guilt, every consideration binds you to leave no means untried to save her from destruction. Perhaps her separation from you may prove that day of adversity to her:—you ought to rejoice if it does, provided she returns to virtue, and if you can be the means of showing her the path to it. I hope, Dunallan, you will soon learn this secret yourself; I hope you will soon know Him, whom to know is eternal life—whom to know is rest, purity, peace, light, happiness inexpressible! inconceivable!” He seemed again lost in feelings, which appeared too powerful for his weak frame, and which gave his countenance an expression of joy so heartfelt, and of peace so profound, that I felt almost willing at that moment to suffer the beloved spirit to depart. His eyes again fell on me, and he smiled with his usual sweet serenity.

““ My dear Dunallan, I cannot describe to you the happiness I enjoy at this moment.”

““ And yet, Churchill, you seem to be in pain, and breathe with such difficulty ——”

““ O! that is nothing!” interrupted he, “let my breathing be still tighter, and my pulse flutter on; I now wish for no delay. There was but one care which hung so heavily on my soul, I shrunk from death. I had no faith to cast it on His mercy, who in this precious volume invited me so to do; and He has in His gentleness condescended to show me ere I depart, that He is the hearer of prayer. My beloved Dunallan, you were that painful heavy care, and you have been brought to me. You have promised to abandon that course, which was leading you to everlasting darkness. You have promised to study this volume, which will guide you to that state to which I now hasten. I have no farther fears. My gracious, my glorious Master will accomplish the renovation of your spirit. We shall meet in His kingdom. Tell my dear Walderford all this. He laments that he cannot be with me; tell him I die in perfect



peace. My mother has placed the treasure of her heart in heaven; her earthly provision is sure,—she will lead her children in her steps. I know who is to be appointed to succeed me in the charge of my people. I know he will feel a still deeper interest than I did in their everlasting concerns. My friend is reclaimed! Gracious Lord, I thank thee!” He sunk back quite exhausted; I thought he was gone, and rang violently, then raised and supported him on my breast.

‘His mother entered, accompanied by a woman whose countenance expressed the deepest grief; they were both greatly alarmed; but though Churchill could not speak, he smiled, and motioned to them to approach.

‘“Let me relieve you,” said his mother to me.

‘“No, no,” said Churchill faintly; he seemed pleased to lean his head on my breast. He took his mother’s hand, and attempted to speak, but could not.

‘“You need repose, my dear Edmund,” said she.

‘“I *feel* repose,” replied he, in a low voice.

‘“Thank God, you always do, Edmund.”

‘“Suffer me, dear Madam, to watch his repose,” said I, dreading to be torn for a moment from him.

‘She looked at me, and then at him, and attempted to smile, but burst into tears.

‘“I believe I must be left with you, nurse,” said Churchill to the woman who had entered with his mother, “and attempt to recover a little strength for one more evening service with you all.”

‘I reluctantly yielded my precious charge, and followed Mrs Churchill to an apartment where her family was assembled. It was a numerous one; the youth whom I had already seen, and six boys and girls still younger.

‘“Are all these the brothers and sisters of Churchill?” asked I.

‘“All but this boy,” replied Mrs Churchill, “he is my child, and Edmund’s brother by adoption; he is an orphan.” She introduced them all to me by name. “Edmund has been brother and father, and tutor, and friend to them all,” added she.



‘Mrs Churchill spoke with composure, but the children could not restrain their feelings. George, the eldest, left the room; and the orphan boy threw himself on the floor, and hiding his face, wept bitterly.

‘“Poor George,” said his mother, “he can appreciate his brother’s character: I know not how he will bear ——” she stopt; but recovering herself, said, “God can give strength suited to our day of weakness.”

‘Grief soon does away all ceremony; we were in a short time perfectly intimate, and I felt a sweet pleasure in having the little brothers and sisters of Churchill in my bosom, and hanging upon me. Mrs Churchill spoke quite freely to me; and when George returned, and saw that we all wept, he staid and gave vent to his grief also without control.

‘Churchill soon sent for us; his countenance brightened on our entrance, but he appeared extremely ill. All gathered round his bed, and the children seemed to have their particular places near him. The youngest slipt down from my arms, climbed upon his bed, and, getting as near him as she could, put her little face close to his. He smiled, and kissed the little rosy cheek, then looked round on all the children with an expression of melancholy pleasure. The servants entered, but turned away their faces when they saw the pale looks of their young master, and the little head that leant upon him. His poor nurse sunk upon her knees, and concealed her face upon his bed. Mrs Churchill, pale as marble, sat with her eyes fixed upon her son. He, with great difficulty, prayed a few short but fervent sentences for those around him, then looking at me, and faintly smiling, he said,

‘“I cannot express what I wish.” Then telling George what part of Scripture he desired to have read to him, he looked for a moment at his mother, then at the children, and then at me. I held his hand in mine; it was cold, and the pulse fluttering. He pressed mine feebly, then turning away his face, laid his other hand on his eyes, and seemed to listen with the deepest attention. When George read that passage from our Lord’s prayer on the eve of his sufferings, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am ——,”



Churchill raised his hand for a moment from his face, and looked towards heaven. A smile of rapture was on his lips; he again covered his eyes; George read on in a broken voice, but he betrayed no farther emotion. His hand at last fell gently from his face. Mrs Churchill uttered a scream of terror on seeing the pale and fixed look; he did not hear it; the pure spirit was at last free.

‘I will not, my dear Catharine, describe the scene that followed—indeed I cannot. Mrs Churchill was a Christian, and had the supports of one. I had no support, and nature and reason yielded for a short time to the agony of my feelings: thank Heaven, it was but for a short time.

‘It was morning when the confusion of my ideas began to subside, and the dreadful truth gradually returned to my recollection. I started from the bed where I had been laid, and perceiving my poor worn out servant asleep, I softly left the room, determining once more to look on that beloved countenance, in which I had so long read the soul of Churchill. I saw a door half open, and entered the room, but could scarcely believe I was in the apartment of my departed friend. There was none of the mockery of death, all was as if nothing unusual had happened. A window was opened, into which had strayed the flowering branch of a white lilac that grew against it, and now filled the apartment with its perfume. I hoped I had only been dreaming of misery, and approached the bed. The curtains were closed; but on gently drawing them aside, I felt the reality of my wretchedness when I discovered Churchill’s mother leaning over his pale corpse. She started on seeing me, but held out her hand with a smile that resembled Churchill’s.

“He is still himself,” said she, turning again to gaze on his countenance; “how placid! how profoundly peaceful! I would not bring him back for a thousand worlds. Oh, God, only permit me soon to follow him. Yet I am wrong in this wish; but I feel so helpless now when that countenance which used to animate my heart is so still!” she shuddered; “Oh, God, support me!”

‘I shall not attempt to describe the day that followed this morning, my dear Catharine, nor the waking of the morning



after. Mrs Churchill's composure when I met her on this second morning surprised me. It was at the door of my friend's apartment; she had locked it, but held the key to me, smiling faintly.

“You wish again to view that forsaken cottage of clay; the spirit is now gone, indeed; we must form new ideas of his state, and learn how to follow him there. May God give you the support he has bestowed on me,” added she,—“it is sufficient even for the widow and the childless!”

‘There was an expression almost of delight in her countenance as she spoke.

“Will you join us soon?” she asked as we parted. I promised, and left her, almost deprecating any support which seemed to me so unnatural.

“And can the mother of Churchill so soon desire to mourn without the bitterness of grief for him?” thought I, as I entered his silent room, and, with a sickness of heart, uncovered the pale face of my friend. She had said right; the impression of his exalted spirit had left its earthly tenement; the features, though still beautiful, bore only the straitened character of death. I remained contemplating his changed countenance with the most wretched and gloomy feelings, till I was interrupted by some one tapping softly at the door of the room. I went to it, and found one of the little sisters of my friend.

“Mamma sent me to fetch you,” said the little thing in a whisper; but though there was an expression of concern on her infantine countenance, it bore the bloom of health and peace, and she smiled when she invited me to go with her.

“So you also have learnt not to feel, little creature,” said I reproachfully to the child, and putting away the little hand she had laid on mine. She looked hurt and abashed at my reproof, but said nothing, and lingered behind me. After going a few steps, I turned to make up for my harshness to the sweet child. She had stolen into her brother's room. I softly followed, and perceived her, with an expression of fondness, press her little cheek to his.

“So you still love your brother,” said I.

“This is not Edmund now,” replied the child; “Edmund is



in heaven, and this is only the house in which his soul lived; and Mamma says this body must be laid under the turf and flowers, beside Papa's, to sleep for a long, long time, till Papa and Edmund return to them again, when they shall awake and go to heaven too;—and Edmund is quite, quite happy now."

"And was Edmund not happy before?" asked I.

"The child hesitated,—then said, as if she told me something very sacred, and looking mournfully at the pale countenance as she spoke,—“I think not quite, for I have seen him weep.”

"Weep!" repeated I.

"Yes. When he used to bring me into this room, and bolt the door, and kneel down, and make me kneel down beside him, and then pray to God; he sometimes wept when he said,—Oh God! be a Father to this child, and teach her to know Thee;—and then he used to take me into his bosom, and speak to me about God; and he used to do this with us all."

"I could not stand this, and exclaimed aloud, "Oh, God of this house, be my God!" I started at my own prayer; my whole character flashed on my recollection. An adulterer! against conviction—against the strongest remonstrances of him who now lay before me—impossible! I attempted to overcome the feelings the innocent recital of the child had inspired, and to recal my former opinions respecting Churchill's religion. "It was enthusiasm," thought I, "a happy superstition, natural to innocent and glowing minds;"—but I could not convince myself. "I must be laid where he is ere I know; and then—but whatever is then disclosed, this world is now a hateful blank to me," thought I, as I turned away from the cold remains of the being on earth I had most really loved.

"I joined Mrs Churchill and her young group. She still appeared composed; but when we were all seated as she wished, and she attempted to preside as usual, her composure entirely forsook her. She struggled, however, with her emotion, and at last so far overcame it as to do all she wished, though she spoke none.

"After an almost untasted breakfast, mixed with tears and audible sobs, Mrs Churchill, pale as death, and scarcely daring to trust her voice to say a few words, gave each of the elder



children some occupation necessary in their mournful circumstances. She then held out some letters to me, and said, with emotion,

“Will the task be too painful? I cannot answer all the letters and inquiries I have received. Will you assist me?”

‘I immediately took them, and sat down to my melancholy task. I was surprised at the number and deep interest of the inquiries respecting my departed friend. How could he, in that remote corner, and in so short a time, have acquired so many and such warm friends? How could he have obliged so many? for each letter expressed the deepest consciousness of obligation, as well as the most earnest anxiety for his recovery.

“Before Mr Churchill came to this neighbourhood,” said one, “I had sought for happiness in vain. The phantom still seemed at a distance, though I imagined that I possessed all that was necessary to bring it to my bosom. He taught me where to seek it, and how to find it; and now I thirst after a delusion no longer, but possess the reality, or at least know its source.”

“Mr Churchill,” said another, “though young enough to be my grandchild, is my spiritual father—and is he to go before me? Would to God I might lay down my useless age in the grave, to preserve him to his family and his people!—but our irreparable loss will be his unspeakable gain.”

“Assure Mr Churchill,” said another, “that his unwearied kindness, and forbearance, and gentleness, have not been so entirely thrown away on me as I fear he suspects. He knows I love him; but he thinks I hate the strictness of his virtues,—but it is for them I really love him; and, though he knows it not, he has never recommended a book to me, that I have not read with my deepest attention; nor warned me against an opinion, that I have not immediately suspected its soundness; nor given me an advice, that I have not at least attempted to follow; nor a reproof, that did not bind my affections closer to him.”

‘Such passages were in every letter. Many seemed to be from people of the lower classes. Mrs Churchill wished them all to be replied to respectfully and kindly; and that those who



had so highly valued the principles taught by her son, should be made acquainted with their complete efficacy in supporting him through his last moments.

‘ This was a painful day ; I would have shrunk from every thing but indulgence of my grief, but I felt ashamed of being weaker than the mother who had lost her support, and first earthly hope, and was left to struggle alone with both grief and cares. She gave herself no indulgence.

‘ On the fourth day, my beloved friend’s remains were laid in the grave—a scene so mournful, I do not wish to recal it ; yet it showed me still more fully how Churchill had been beloved. Indeed, this impression is almost all I recollect ; for in attempting to suppress my own emotions before so many witnesses, I was incapable of observing what passed around me. One circumstance I will recal. When the service was over, and the coffin was lowered into its narrow house, an old man, with his grey head uncovered, read aloud what was marked on the lid—“ Aged twenty-four,” and clasping his withered hands, exclaimed, “ He is laid low, and an old cumberer of the ground is left ! But Thou doest all things aright,” added he, raising his eyes, dimmed with tears, to heaven. Poor George, the brother of my friend, whose composure hitherto had surprised me, at the exclamation of the old man, joined to the chilling sound of the mould thrown on the coffin, fainted and fell lifeless into my arms. The poor youth was carried away, but I could not go until I had seen the last melancholy duties concluded. When all was over, a young man of very graceful appearance, whom I had not before observed, approached, and, with a look of much emotion and concern, offered his arm to me. I felt very faint, and gladly accepted the stranger’s kindness. We lingered at the grave after all was finished,—indeed every one seemed reluctant to leave the spot. At last we slowly turned from the narrow abode of my friend, my counsellor—my all. The young stranger walked with me to the entrance of Mrs Churchill’s house. He inquired with great interest about her and her young family ; and attempted to say something regarding his acquaintance with Churchill, but was soon too much affected to proceed. On taking leave, he named himself to me—the Mr Clanmar, with whom,



my dear Catharine, you are acquainted. We had known each other as children, but since that time we had not met. He was now on a visit to a maternal uncle in that part of England. His manners and sympathy were pleasing to me, and we parted mutually desiring to meet again.

‘ I had nothing now to detain me at —, but an earnest desire to be useful if possible to the mother of my friend. She was perfectly open with me on every subject; but though I found that the independence which Churchill had deemed secured to his mother was extremely limited, her spirit was too like that of her son for any one to presume even to insinuate a wish to interfere in her private concerns. She saw, however, that I was dissatisfied with what she told me of her circumstances and future plans, and said, smiling sadly,

“ You will often, I hope, Mr Dunallan, be able to judge for yourself, whether we are comfortable. You, I am sure, will not forget us. Perhaps,” added she, “ you think me proud. I read in your countenance that you do, and I fear I must confirm you in that opinion of me, when I assure you that nothing would be more painful to me than any attempt, either open or disguised, to deprive me of that feeling of independence, which perhaps I value too highly, but which has been made dear to me by peculiar circumstances. You, Mr Dunallan, will not condemn me, I believe, for having preferred these circumstances to any other, with such a companion as Edmund’s father, when I tell you that your departed friend greatly resembled, and, excellent and amiable as he was, did not excel that father in any quality of the head or heart. I married Mr Churchill, not against the consent of my family, for he would not have married me on such terms; but their consent was mixed with disappointment and pity, and a dread of our becoming dependent. Thank God, that has not hitherto, in the slightest degree, been the case—less so than even those very friends have wished. They asked my children from me, when they saw them so lovely and engaging. They wished to adopt our Edmund, but his father would never consent to part with one of his treasures, or for any worldly advantage remove them from the influence of those principles which he thought more valuable than all that the world offered without



them. Edmund pursued his father's wishes—indeed they were his own; and, to this moment, we have been wholly independent of friends. I wish to continue so. I trust I shall be enabled to lead my children aright. This now is the use of my existence. When it is accomplished, I shall be permitted to depart, and be with those who have the best and greatest share of my poor affections.”

‘I could say nothing to all this. There remained only one means of showing my love and esteem for my departed friend,—the poor consolation of marking the spot where he lay; and even this was denied me by the affectionate ardour of his parishioners, who had requested his mother's permission, on the day of his funeral, to erect a monument to his memory and usefulness among them; and I was only permitted to be a sharer in this last tribute of affection.

‘I prepared to leave ——, and to go I knew not whither, and I cared not. I detested the idea of home, and determined not to go where it was possible I should meet Aspasia. All other parts of the creation were alike to me. Clanmar was much with me the few days I remained at ——. He, however, had no power as yet to engage my attention or affections. I became every moment more abstracted, and only longed for solitude wherever I could find it. Clanmar wished to travel. He proposed it to me. I liked the plan, because I would have liked any change; but the idea of his being with me did not please me; yet he was so feelingly attentive to me, so considerate and indulgent to my humour, that I could not help being grateful, and agreed to do as he wished. He seemed delighted, and immediately set off for London, to make every necessary preparation. I took a melancholy leave of Mrs Churchill, and her sweet and interesting family, the night after Clanmar's departure, and left her house very early in the morning after—a beautiful morning in spring. All was in complete contrast to my feelings—all looked smiling and gay. The fields were fresh and beautiful. The birds, the children as I passed their cottages, all seemed only awakened to happiness. Even Churchill's grave, when I went for the last time to lay my aching head and breast upon it, was gilded by the rays of a bright morning sun; but no gloom was ever near him.



‘ It was towards evening when I stopped at a small inn in the little town of ——. My thoughts during this solitary day had been most painfully gloomy. Like all who are young in misfortune, I felt as if Heaven had marked me out for suffering; and the gay appearance of nature around me, seemed to mock at the grief that was inflicted: while recollections of Churchill, his ardent affection, his wise and gentle admonitions, his friendship so tried, so perfect, lost to me for ever, overwhelmed my exhausted and rebellious spirit.

‘ Gloomy and miserable, I followed my conductor to a little parlour of the inn, and, desiring that I might not be disturbed, continued to pursue my wretched thoughts. The noise of the house did not interrupt me, but that of a carriage driving rapidly into the court did. I dreaded meeting any one I knew, and impatiently approached the window, to discover if I had any cause for this fear. It was an open carriage, in which there were two ladies and a gentleman. One lady’s face was turned away, but I knew the figure too well, and started back from the window. It was Aspasia. I cannot describe the confusion of my feelings—my promise to Churchill—recollections of Aspasia—friendship—honour—tenderness—yet my first impulse was to fly from her. But I dared not venture to pass near her carriage. I had promised never again to see her. The expression of heavenly joy which animated Churchill’s countenance when I made that promise, was again before me, and the scenes that followed. I became calm, and determined to remain where I was till she departed, and then hasten to where I should have no dread of ever beholding her. I waited in anxious expectation to hear the carriage drive away, but in vain: and I began to dread an intention on her part to remain at the inn during the night, and determined, should that be the case, to leave the house as soon as I possibly could, without being seen by Aspasia. But a more severe exertion than flight was destined for me. After listening anxiously to every sound, for what appeared to me a tedious length of time, my servant entered, and presented me with Aspasia’s card, saying, “The lady was in a parlour below, that she could only stay for a few moments, and desired to see me.”



“And who informed the lady that I was here?” asked I angrily.

‘She had seen my servant, and recognised him.

‘I felt myself a coward. I dared not go to Aspasia. I dared not trust myself to see her; indeed, I had promised I never would. I could not send a message, I dreaded the effects, should I suddenly break to her my intention to part from her for ever. I hesitated in a state almost beside myself; but, hearing a noise below, and dreading that she herself might come in search of me, I desired my servant to admit no person whatever, and rapidly wrote the following few words to Aspasia:—

‘“I cannot see you, Aspasia. If you knew how I am changed, you would not wish to see me; my most ardent desire is that you should forget my miserable existence. I shall soon write to you more fully—quite fully. In the meantime spare me.”

‘I sealed my note and sent it, desiring my servant to follow me as soon as he could get horses, and determined to leave the inn on foot, to escape the possibility of meeting Aspasia. I had to pass the parlour where she was, and approached it softly. What poor and shrinking creatures guilt makes us! I heard her voice exclaim,

‘“What! a note! where is Mr Dunallan?”

‘“Gone, madam,” replied my servant. I started at the happy falsehood.

‘“Gone! gone! how! impossible!” exclaimed Aspasia.

‘“My master has left the house on foot,” replied my servant, whom I never before detected in a falsehood, “and has ordered me to follow with the carriage as soon as I can get horses.”

‘I thought Aspasia had returned into the parlour, and approached softly to pass the door, she stood in the entrance, a little turned from me, and was slowly reading my note. I advanced another step; she started, and turned round; I stopped, as if transfixed to the spot; she became deadly pale, but with a look of disdain waved her hand for me to pass, then regarding me more fixedly, her countenance softened into an expression of pity and tenderness.

‘“How changed indeed!” exclaimed she, looking earnestly at me, and then observing my deep mourning, she burst into tears.



‘ “Forgive me, Dunallan,” said she, “but why do you shun me? Do you think I am only formed to amuse you in the day of prosperity? You do not know me, Dunallan,” added she, passionately. “I do know you, Aspasia,” replied I, scarcely daring to trust myself to look at her;—“I know you are too noble, too generous, too ——; but this is not a place in which I can explain myself,” observing people approaching. “Come into this room a moment, then,” said she.

‘ “No, no, I must not, I cannot. I shall write you the instant it is in my power.”

‘ “But when shall we meet again, Dunallan?”

‘ “I cannot tell; I will write every thing.”

‘ “You must not leave me!” exclaimed she, quite regardless of the people who were collecting near us,—“you shall not leave me, till you have fixed a time for us to meet again.”

‘ “Impossible, I am going abroad.”

‘ “Abroad! when? Do you go alone?” asked she eagerly.

‘ I knew not what reply to make; and, annoyed by the people who gazed at us, I peremptorily ordered them away: then seizing Aspasia’s hand, led her into the parlour, and said, as coolly as I could, “I go abroad immediately; a friend goes with me. We shall not return for some time. Aspasia, we ought, and we must forget each other. But allow me to write, I cannot speak.”

‘ She could not either, but became excessively pale.

‘ “Farewell,” I attempted to say, but could scarcely articulate the word. She bowed coldly. I went towards the door, and opened it, when I was arrested by a deep sob. I turned round, and saw Aspasia just fainting. I flew to her, and received her in my arms as she fell. I gazed at her pale and lovely countenance, as it lay deprived of animation; “and this is my work!” thought I; “and can it be virtue to leave her to suffer? No, it is cruel, detestable selfishness.” I laid her on a sofa, and rang for assistance, and then, regardless of what happened, supported the lifeless form in my arms. The room was soon filled with people, who looked strangely at me, but I cared not. The lady and gentleman also entered who had been in the carriage with Aspasia. I knew neither. They looked surprised and alarmed,



and the gentleman eyed me with looks of suspicion and displeasure; and, approaching, haughtily offered to relieve me from my charge.

“I shall apply for relief when I wish for it,” replied I, with equal haughtiness, “and when I see any one I deem entitled to offer it;” and then giving orders to those around me to bring assistance, I continued supporting Aspasia, until the efforts of the lady who had been her companion, restored animation. She opened her eyes, and looked languidly around; but at length fixing them on the gentleman, who, after my angry reply, had stood silent at some distance, she started,

“My brother! and where is ——?” She did not pronounce my name, but, looking eagerly around, she discovered her own situation, and whose arms supported her. An expression of pleasure for a moment brightened her countenance, but instantly changed to alarm, on again turning to the now stern aspect of her brother. She started from me, and seizing his hand,

“Augustus,” said she, “I will explain all this to you;” then turning to me, “Now, my friend, I shall detain you no longer.” She seemed anxious I should depart.

Her brother coldly withdrew his hand from hers, and desiring every one to leave the room, as there was no further need of assistance, also with a haughty look included me in the number. The others instantly obeyed; I stood still, returning his haughty looks with interest. Aspasia approached me, and, with an imploring expression of countenance, “I entreat you to leave me,” said she.

“Since *you* wish it, I certainly will, Aspasia; but I remain here this night;” and throwing my card on the table as I passed her brother, I slowly left the room.

When again shut up alone in my apartment, I dared not trust myself to think; but, pacing in agony from one end to the other of its narrow bounds, repeated to myself an hundred times, “The die is cast! my fate is determined; I cannot draw back!” When a recollection of Churchill would have returned to me, I repelled it with terror; it brought distraction with it. I continued pacing my room and listening to every noise, as I expected a messenger from the brother of Aspasia—but none



came. Night drew on, and I knew not what to dread or hope. I rang for my servant, and inquired if the party still remained in the house. I was answered in the affirmative; that they had continued shut up together with Aspasia ever since I left them, and had given orders that they should not be disturbed. It was supposed that they would remain for the night. My servant also informed me, that the lady who accompanied Aspasia was the wife of her brother, Colonel Hartford. I knew the character of this lady. I had often heard Aspasia speak of her as one of those plain, sensible, correct women, whom she never could make comprehend what she felt on any subject. I now began to feel for Aspasia more than for myself. What might she not suffer from an angry brother, and a sister so unlike herself! I almost determined to break in upon them, and offer her my protection, but dreaded adding to her difficulties. It was past twelve o'clock when my servant brought me the following note:

“Colonel Hartford requests a few minutes’ conversation with Mr Dunallan at seven o'clock to-morrow morning. Colonel Hartford is aware that any communication from him to Mr Dunallan would have mutually been more agreeably conveyed by a third person; but the nature of the conversation he alludes to makes that impossible.”

‘I immediately wrote a note consenting to this meeting, and then returned to my miserable thoughts. From what I had seen of Colonel Hartford, I foresaw that a conversation with him could only end in a meeting of a more serious nature; such a meeting, for such a cause, must for ever ruin the character of Aspasia, and then every law of honour, and of the world I had lived in, bound me, should I survive, not to abandon her. I groaned in agony as I finished this sketch of the future. Churchill’s dying words and looks had mingled with my thoughts, and I again hurriedly paced my chamber, attempting, if possible, not to think at all. I did not go to bed, for I could not sleep, and I dreaded its quiet. At last I recollected that these moments might be the last I should have, as our meeting would not probably be long delayed if Colonel Hartford should feel as I expected he would. I wrote to Aspasia, and to my father,



and to Mrs Churchill, though the last almost deprived me of my little remaining fortitude. As I finished these letters the day began to dawn. It was a fresh and beautiful morning; and I felt, as it brightened, that my thoughts only changed from the deepest gloom to the most overpowering sadness. That sun I had seen gild the grave of my friend the preceding morning, it might soon also gild mine; and should we then meet? If he had not believed an illusion—never! and if he had, all was only uncertainty, and uncertainty brings no peace even to the guilty. If I survived, my broken promise to Churchill would live for ever with me: but Aspasia would not be unhappy, and I should at least suffer alone; each alternative shut out all hope of happiness; I knew not which most to dread. At last I yielded to fatigue, and throwing myself on the bed, slept till my servant called me to meet Colonel Hartford. My short sleep had revived my spirits, and I entered the room where the Colonel waited for me, prepared to meet the haughty and threatening looks with which he had eyed me the evening before. His back was to me as I entered, but when he turned round, I was struck with the change in his appearance; he was now pale, and evidently distressed, though attempting to suppress his feelings. After the door was closed, and a short, and on his side, an embarrassed pause—

“Mr Dunallan,” said he, “I am acquainted with your character, and think that, in our present circumstances, I shall act most wisely by being perfectly open with you.”

‘I bowed, I believe coldly, for I was not prepared for such an address.

‘A slight flush passed across the brow of Colonel Hartford, and he stopped and hesitated. “I am not accustomed,” added he, a little haughtily, “to ask favours. I do not well know how to set about it; particularly where ——,” he stopt.

“Where you have been injured,” said I. Neither am I accustomed to inflict injuries,” added I, “and I know not how to plead guilty.”

‘Colonel Hartford smiled, though the smile was a sad one.

“I am right, I perceive,” said he, “and will proceed. Aspasia has confessed her affection for you, Mr Dunallan,” added he,



looking on the ground, and reddening as he spoke, "but she has authorised me to say, that she feels for her family, and will attempt to subdue a passion, the indulgence of which can only end in her and your misery. This, however, I confess, has been extorted from her by entreaties, and every possible means, and, I feel too certain, would yield to one wish of yours." The Colonel paused.

"What do you wish me to do?" asked I.

"Mr Dunallan," replied he, "I have no reason to suppose my wishes could overcome such feelings as I witnessed yesterday. I would appeal to those feelings, and ask you, if they could endure seeing the creature you so much love, the victim of shame, and remorse, and guilt?"

"I started, for I perceived that Aspasia's brother was deceived, and supposed her still innocent. He ascribed my change of countenance to another cause.

"I see," said he, "I speak to one still young in evil as in years."

"I shook my head, too conscious of his mistake.

"You think not. Well, be satisfied with what you know of it; and be assured that guilty pleasures are fatally injurious not only to happiness and to respectability, but even to the powers of the mind, to all that is valuable in this world; and, if there is another—but I go too far. I wished to appeal to your generosity. Aspasia has married into a family very different from her own in all their opinions and sentiments. She has too completely adopted those opinions, which are pernicious in the extreme, and her own family are deeply distressed on this account, for she is beloved by them all. Were she to yield to the influence of the false views of right and wrong which she has adopted with regard to the most sacred of all connections, she would kill a father whose life has been devoted to his children, and who could not survive their dishonour. She would—but I shall say no more; you must understand me, Mr Dunallan; my meeting you in this humiliating manner, on such a subject, must prove to you the extent of the misery I attempt to avert." He turned away, almost overcome by emotion.

"I do understand you, Colonel Hartford, and shall be



equally frank with you. I cannot promise never again to see Aspasia, because I dare not trust my own promises. You will believe this when I tell you, that it is not yet a fortnight since I promised to the friend I most loved on earth, and that friend in his last moments, that I would never again see Aspasia; and though misery must follow the breach of such a promise I have broken it."

"But did you not meet her by accident yesterday?"

"I did, and attempted to shun her; but when she fainted, and I again found myself near her, I determined to give up all rather than quit her. In intention, at least, I have broken that most sacred promise."

"Break it no farther, and you will be able to forgive yourself," said Colonel Hartford.

"And Aspasia—unfortunate!"

"I know exactly how you will feel regarding her," interrupted Colonel Hartford; "but all reasoning must be false, Mr Dunallan, which supposes a life of guilt can, even in the society of the most beloved object, be a happy one. Leave Aspasia to reflection, and the cares of her family. I assure you they shall be tender cares; and she certainly will be less unhappy than she would be were she guilty."

"I go abroad immediately," replied I; "that I believe is a better security than my promise. One letter I must write to Aspasia. If I dared, I would say it should be the last."

"Mr Dunallan," replied the Colonel, "I feel secure of your sincerity at least; and see plainly that your own happiness depends on your separation from my unhappy sister."

"We then parted, and I immediately set off for London. I felt as if I had escaped from destruction; yet I deeply blamed myself for having seen Aspasia, at least I might have avoided much that had happened; and I felt all the degradation of guilt when I recollected that I had left Colonel Hartford without having undeceived him; yet this I thought, for Aspasia's peace, I could not do. But one crime gradually taints the whole character. An adulterer must overcome his repugnance at being a hypocrite also. I did feel happier, however, and again dared to indulge in recollections of Churchill. I now regarded him as



almost my guardian angel; yet I could not banish thoughts of Aspasia,—most painful, sometimes almost insupportably painful thoughts.

‘ In a few days I embarked with Clanmar for Italy. I do not mean, however, my dear Catharine, to describe to you at present any of those countries through which I wandered for the two following years. My admiration of the beauties of nature, and my thirst for knowledge on every subject did not abandon me; but they were influenced, for the most of that time, by the wretchedness of my feelings.

‘ We passed the first six months in Italy. Clanmar was for a short time almost as miserable as myself; but his grief was soon over, and he again sought those pleasures and amusements, in which a youth of idleness, and complete indulgence, had led him to seek for happiness. Yet he never forgot his melancholy companion, but sought to draw me into those scenes which he found, at least for a time, dissipated his own melancholy; for Clanmar was formed for higher pursuits, though early neglect had left his uncultivated mind a prey to all the impressions it might receive from books that interested his passions, or amused his idleness, without informing his mind; and from the scenery of a beautiful country, to which he was exquisitely alive. But Clanmar’s amusements and pleasures had no charms for me. Your sex, my dear Catharine, to whom he was devoted, I shunned, for I felt a melancholy pleasure in sacrificing all the fascinations of their society to the recollection of Aspasia. I had kept my promise with regard to her, and had written but one letter, though her answer to that one had breathed nothing but despairing wretchedness. I had been a hundred times on the eve of returning to England to offer her my love and protection, but was happily deterred by the recollection of Churchill, and of her brother’s conversation with me. I however wrote to Colonel Hartford, that he must at least let me hear of her, if he expected me to remain at a distance; and he wrote me with extreme kindness, frankness, and feeling. This correspondence was the only pleasure of my existence. I wandered from one scene of beautiful ruins, in that beautiful country, to another; I inquired into the nature of the government of each state, and



the character of its inhabitants ;—and all seemed to be, like myself, the wretched remains of something better and greater. Clanmar's pursuit of pleasure, at the expense of every thing else, at times grieved me ; but I felt as if it was impossible to decide what was good and what was evil. The time had been, that I could have expatiated to him on the powers of the human mind, and the happiness to be derived from its cultivation ; but that time was over. I felt my own weakness, and pretended not to teach another. When the mind, my dear Catharine, is in this weak, and useless, and gloomy state, I believe it is natural to feel a rebellious displeasure at the Author of our existence ; at least I felt this to an extreme degree. When I beheld the profuse beauty of nature, contrasted with the misery and degradation of those for whom it was created, instead of feeling that it was the effect of goodness, it seemed derision. I had read the observations on parts of the Bible, which my ever-lamented Churchill had written for me. I was reading attentively the Bible, also, which he had given me, and because he had loved it I held it sacred, though my mind and feeling still revolted at many parts of it. I, however, became acquainted with its contents, and with its language and style, and had discovered the sources of all Churchill's peculiar opinions. His own observations were short, but powerfully convincing. As yet, however, this volume, so prized by him, had no influence whatever on me.

' After leaving Italy, we went into Switzerland, and its scenery for a time wholly engrossed both Clanmar's attention and my own. He sought for no other pleasure than that of contemplating it ; and I, too, for a time, forgot all other things. Born and reared amidst mountainous scenery, this had an indescribable power over us. We thought we could have remained for ever with pleasure amongst its sublime and varied beauties. But Clanmar, in a short time, again longed for his usual pleasures and amusements. He went into society in search of them, and left me much alone. My melancholy returned, and I spent eight or nine miserable months almost in solitude. During this time, however, one cause of my unhappiness was removed, though even its removal left a sting of disappointment and bitterness. Aspasia had learned to live without me, and even



to be happy. Colonel Hartford had written me regularly, and with the compassionate concern of a father; and his last letters had described Aspasia as the charm of every society, by her powers of conversation, and other attractive graces. I felt certain that Colonel Hartford had always written me the exact truth, and I was forced to believe him on this occasion; but though it was a relief to me to know that Aspasia was not unhappy, I also felt that now there was not a creature on earth who really loved me.

‘It was at this time, my dear Catharine, that my father became urgent with me to return home. You know, my sweet friend, what his wishes were; and you will now understand how little I could feel disposed, at that time, to look for happiness in a new attachment, or to hope to find that warm and constant affection my heart sighed for, in any of your sex. I excused myself to my father, and left Switzerland to remove myself farther from his entreaties.

‘I now endeavoured to forget Aspasia, and happier feelings began to return. Thoughts of ambition, and a desire for distinction, sometimes resumed their long-lost power over me. “What had I done,” thought I, “to prevent my aspiring to any degree of eminence? What had I done, that any young man in my situation, and with my temptations, would not have done?” I sometimes felt as if Churchill had led me to think myself more guilty than I really had been; but no feeling of displeasure against him ever gained admittance twice; and when I thought of returning to the world and to active life, my consciousness of weakness made me desire most anxiously to find some principle to guide and strengthen me, more powerful than any I yet knew.

‘I determined, therefore, to study again, and more carefully, that system which had so completely influenced my almost perfect friend. I shut myself up for this purpose several hours every day. I studied with my whole attention, and at last, with the assistance of what Churchill had written for me, I became master at least of the system of religion which he had drawn from the Bible. I had followed him through the whole Scriptures, and saw clearly, that this system was supported by every part of them; or, rather, that it was an abstract of the whole



spirit of those Scriptures. I found that, according to them, man was originally created for the happy purpose of knowing and serving to glorify the Author of his existence. All his powers and affections were formed for those noble purposes; all his felicity was to flow from the exertion of those powers and affections to those exalted ends. But man had not fulfilled the purposes for which he was brought into existence. He had disobeyed the goodness which had bestowed life upon him, and had perverted his power and capacity of choosing for himself, by offending in the single point in which it was possible for him to do so; he had chosen to know evil, at the known risk of incurring the displeasure of God, and he was justly given over to its influence.

‘ Thus far, my dear Catharine, I could acquiesce ; but next followed, that the children of our first, unhappy rebellious parent, inherited his guilt ; and, though still in possession of the powers, and capacities, and affections at first bestowed on him, these were so influenced by evil, that, though still ardently thirsting for that happiness for which they were originally destined, they sought it every where but from its true and only source, and therefore were continually disappointed.

‘ Churchill attempted not either to explain or vindicate this doctrine, so difficult to comprehend or reconcile to our ideas of justice. He found it in every part of Scripture, and only asked the question, “ Whether the state of the moral world could be accounted for on other principles ? ” I supposed he had been aware that he could not defend this point, and read on ; but, on the contrary, I found that upon these principles the whole system was founded, and every page that followed only tended to their illustration. The state of the human mind and heart by nature, I found uniformly represented in Scripture as defective in all that is valuable in the sight of Heaven, and always deserving of its displeasure ; and that deliverance from this displeasure is absolutely necessary, before we can be restored to the favour of our Creator. The means of this deliverance, Churchill pointed out to me, was revealed in the very beginning of the Scriptures, and discovered more and more distinctly down till the coming of Him whom, eighteen hundred years after that



event, Churchill had loved with the real and deep conviction of his heart, as his Lord, and Master, and Saviour.

‘ This was my beloved Churchill’s religion. He, perfect as I thought him, regarded his own nature as perverted and depraved, and was fully convinced, that he required an atonement to expiate his guilt ; a holiness to answer for that law broken by him ; and a new principle of life to restore the affections of his heart, and the capacities and powers of his mind to their original object and use ;—and all these, he had often declared to me, before I had attempted to understand him, he had found in the knowledge of that Divine Being who is “despised and rejected of men,” till they have sought happiness every where else. “But,” he would add, with the deepest emotion, “none who find Him seek farther.”

‘ I now knew Churchill’s system, and in some degree understood it, but I knew not how to make it my own. I felt that it did account for the state of my mind and feelings. I had sought happiness in guilty pleasures, in ambition, and in the study of men, of books, and of nature,—and I was still wretched. But how was I to find what Churchill pointed out to me ? How was I to ascertain that all he had felt was not an illusion ?

‘ One beautiful evening I had walked out by the lake, my thoughts busily occupied with the subject I had been studying, and from that cause, even more than usually alive to the beauty and sublime grandeur of the scenery around me. I had got into a solitary recess at the foot of one of the mountains which surrounded the lake, and remained long in this favourite retreat,—sometimes deep in thought, sometimes contemplating with rapture the varied beauties which surrounded me. The lake in all its splendour lay before me. The sun poured its bright rays into its bosom.

‘ “Oh, that thy Creator would illuminate mine !” I ardently sighed, as I gazed on its brightness ; and, bending my knees for the first time since I had knelt at my mother’s lap, I burst into tears.

‘ This softness was luxury to a heart which had been so long embittered and rebellious.

‘ I attempted to pray, but I knew not how. I wished from



my soul I could believe the Scriptures, but uncertainty clouded my ideas of the Being before whom I knelt. Yet when I rose, though light had not been poured into my soul, the calmness at least of the lake had entered into it. From that day, my dearest Catharine, light also began to dawn. I read, I reflected, I learned to pray; and at last found that peace which is past understanding—that source of happiness which, as my friend had said, when once found, we seek no farther,—the knowledge of which makes all else, in comparison, wholly valueless.

‘And now, my dearest, sweetest friend, you know all the events and misery which led to that change in my opinions, which you have so often heard ridiculed.

‘I feel no surprise that it should excite ridicule. How can I, when I recollect the light in which those opinions I have now adopted once appeared to myself.

‘I have little more to say, my sweet friend. From the time I fully comprehended the first principles of the Christian religion, every thing in nature, every thing in society, every feeling, and every power of my heart and mind appeared to me in a new light; but I learned slowly, and have still much to learn, of the extreme weakness and ignorance of the human mind; and of the perversion of the heart, and the strength of its passions. I have now, however, discovered the source of true knowledge, true virtue, and true strength. That you, my beloved Catharine, should also discover this, is my most ardent and constant prayer.

‘After I had been abroad about three years, I was called to England by the melancholy intelligence that my only sister was thought dangerously ill. I hurried to her; but my aunt will tell you her melancholy story, my dearest Catharine. I witnessed in her the powerful and happy influence of those principles I had embraced,—they soothed her bed of death.

‘We conveyed her from one place to another, in the vain hope that change of air and scene might restore her, but without effect. On our return from —, we stopt at Mrs Churchill’s, and there my sister became so much worse that she could not be removed. Mrs Churchill was a mother to her, and she remained in her house till the last scene was over. Mrs



Churchill rejoiced in my change of sentiments, and in the cheerful, and at times even joyful, resignation of my poor sister.

‘Mrs Churchill’s family had improved under her care in every way. George was at college, the younger children amiable and interesting, and in all the bloom of health, happiness, and peace. Poor Mrs Churchill looked wonderfully older; grief had made slow but sure ravages in her constitution, resigned and pious as she was.

‘During my stay in England, I met many of my former friends; but, in general, we mutually found each other changed. Walderford, and a few others, still retained their affection for me, and I became, through Walderford, acquainted in society in which my newly imbibed principles were understood and valued. Amongst these I formed many friendships; but an unfortunate wish of my father’s made me abandon all these, and again leave my country. I need not name this wish to you, my dearest Catharine, but I would explain to you why I felt so averse to fulfilling it, and my chief reason was this:—I had learned that a promise had been won from you, while a mere child, similar to that which my father had obtained from me. I shall tell you how I became acquainted with this. For a short time after I returned to England, my sister’s illness took a more favourable turn, and I took that opportunity to pay an unexpected visit to my father. I found him in the same most unhappy situation in which I had left him; and the more kindly he received me, and the more affection I felt for him, the more distressing was it to witness that situation. I had only been one day at home, when my father returned to his favourite theme—my settling in my own country. He made me the most extravagant offers. I endeavoured to evade giving any answer, but that was impossible; at last I said—

“But, my dear father, do you wish to have your son rejected by Miss Dunallan? You describe her as surrounded by the most agreeable admirers. I have no chance in such a competition.”

“Oh,” replied he, “you are safe; the lady may amuse herself in making conquests, but it is many years since she made



a promise never to marry any man but the one chosen by her father."

"Many years!" repeated I; "Miss Dunallan is still very young."

"She is," replied my father; "but Lord Dunallan has taught her to regard her promise as sacred; and she is one of those proud spirits who feel more bound by such engagements than by the ceremony of marriage itself. There is but one event can break this bond," added my father, and you will read it there," giving me a letter.

'It was from your father, my dear Catharine; and its contents confirmed all my father had said, and declared that the only thing which could absolve his daughter from her promise, was his permission to make another choice,—a permission nothing would induce him to give, but the certainty that I wished to decline the connection.

'I detested this tyranny, and determined as far as I could, consistently with my promise to my father, to give you, my dear Catharine, the power to make a choice for yourself; and in displeasing your father by delay, I supposed that I promoted this plan.

'After much entreaty, I obtained my father's consent again to go abroad, for, determined as he was that I should sometime fulfil his wishes, his naturally yielding temper could not resist my importunity in asking delay.

'I will not conceal from you also, my dear Catharine, since I now can with truth say I was deceived, that I disliked the character I had heard of you; and, believing also that I should be very little suited to your taste, I looked upon our union as the beginning of misery, as far as domestic concerns could produce it, to both of us. I therefore took leave of my friends, and my country, and again became a wanderer.

'You know, my dearest Catharine, what called me home and what followed. It was during my stay abroad, that, at the request of some friends in England, I undertook my present mission. They knew my wish to remain abroad, and that I cared not where, but only longed to make my existence of some use to my fellow-creatures—and now I am banished for I know not how long.



‘I have put you in possession of all my secrets, my sweet friend; shall I add this most true one, that during my banishment I look forward to your letters, to your promised confidence and friendship, as my dearest and most longed-for earthly pleasure. Adieu, dearest Catharine; remember your promise of perfect openness with your devoted friend,

‘E. H. DUNALLAN.’

---

## CHAPTER XII.

CATHARINE had been so completely absorbed while reading Dunallan’s letter, that the time had passed away quite unobserved. She had read it with the most varied feelings. Some parts she scarcely, even after several perusals, understood. Conscious of this, she was again searching for those passages, when, to her surprise, she was summoned to meet Mrs Oswald at dinner. She complied with the summons, but was so absent that she answered at cross purposes whatever was addressed to her. Mrs Oswald at last gave up all attempts at conversation, and continued to eat her dinner in silence, but soon exclaimed,

‘Oh, stop! don’t eat that, my dear.’

‘Why, Madam?’ replied Catharine, starting from her reverie.

‘Because, my love,’ said Mrs Oswald, continuing to laugh, ‘you have declined John’s offer of sugar, and have completely covered your pudding with salt.’

Catharine blushed, and joined in Mrs Oswald’s laugh; and, during the rest of the time she remained in the dining room, she was tolerably present to what passed.

After dinner, Mrs Oswald said she had a short letter to write, and Catharine had again engaged herself as deeply as ever with the contents of Dunallan’s packet, when obliged to meet Mrs Oswald at tea. Now, however, there were no servants present, and she avowed the cause of her absence of thought. Mrs Oswald seemed to enter quite into her feelings, and rising in her quick way after tea, said,

‘Good bye, my dear, I shall be busy till we meet at prayers,



and I believe you will not be at a loss to find employment ; whenever you have anything to say to me, however, remember I am quite at your command.'

'Oh, my dear Mrs Oswald, I shall have a great deal to say to you, but as yet I scarcely know where to begin.'

'I know that, my love, so good bye. I hope Edward in that letter has made you fully acquainted with all his singularities.'

'Not quite ; he still refers me to the books he recommended to me ; and, though he avows that his intention in thus kindly—thus condescendingly, making me acquainted with all his secrets, as he calls them, is to describe to me the change that has taken place in his opinions, yet, when he comes to describe what that change is, he does so in a few short sentences.'

Mrs Oswald smiled, 'That is, indeed, rather provoking my love, and I will not attempt to plead his excuse. You must make your complaints to himself.' She then left Catharine, who returned to her letter.

'Yes, I must complain to himself,' thought she, pleased with the idea ; 'but what shall I say to many parts of this letter !' Aspasia, what can I say regarding her ? Unfortunate Aspasia !' thought she, sighing ; but recollecting that she had been the means of rendering Dunallan guilty and unhappy, and then had forgotten him, she thought of her only with detestation ; the idea of her was painful, and she attempted to banish it, but could not succeed. She, however, was quite aware, that, in his attachment to Aspasia, contrary as it was to the morality of religion, Dunallan had not been more guilty than many others who regarded their past lives without any apparent feeling of self-reproach. Her father, and those friends with whom he most frequently associated, had spent their younger years together. Some of these they had spent abroad ; and Catharine had often heard those years of gallantry and dissipation recalled as the happiest of their lives. It was true her presence had sometimes been forgotten when the charms of Madame de —— or Lady —— had been expatiated on with delighted recollection ; and when her father and his friends had reproached each other, or rather, from their tones of voice, complimented each other.



Catharine had always been disgusted by such conversations, and she loved Dunallan for the misery he had suffered, while entangled in guilt. She ardently desired to comprehend those principles which he described as so powerful, and whose influence seemed so delightful—so purifying. She ardently wished that she also might feel their influence; for she had learned to esteem Dunallan's understanding too highly to believe that his reason could be subdued by an illusion of his imagination, which she had supposed the case with those enthusiasts, with whose notions she had been led to suppose Dunallan was tainted. She had read various parts of his letter over many times, and sat in deep thought over its contents. Dunallan's attachment to Aspasia was the part of his story which, however, left the deepest and most unpleasing impression, and which still recurred when she attempted to fix her thoughts on other subjects. She could not disguise the truth to herself; Dunallan had been passionately attached to this woman, who seemed, by his description, to have been very charming. Catharine sighed when she recalled that description:—'Such powers of conversation! Such grace! Such cultivation of mind!' 'Ah!' thought she, 'these are the charms which irresistibly attract the heart against its better resolutions! The innocence of a country education and of country morals, must be approved of on cool reflection; but can reflection guide the heart? Can religion dispose of the affections as it pleases?' She shook her head incredulously at the idea; 'or does Dunallan's religion, which seems to consider the human heart so evil, forbid us to fix our affections at all on what is so unworthy? No; for how ardently does Churchill love his friend!' Catharine had wept over Churchill's story. 'Unhappy Dunallan!' thought she; 'while I supposed him wandering every where in search of pleasure, regardless of the pain he inflicted on his father, he has himself been endeavouring to fly from suffering—and from me,' she could not help adding. 'But he must shrink from the idea of ever again being attached to any one; and, after what he has known of real affection, how hateful to him must be the idea of a connection for life with a creature he may neither be able to reason nor moralize himself into loving.'



Thus far only had Catharine arrived in arranging her ideas, when again obliged to join Mrs Oswald.

‘Well, my love,’ said that lady, ‘are you now more reconciled to Dunallan’s method of making you acquainted with his sentiments?’

‘My dear Mrs Oswald,’ replied Catharine earnestly, ‘will you be frank with me, and reply to a few questions I wish extremely to have answered?’

‘Certainly, my love.’

‘Well, then, my dear Madam, tell me first, does your religion and Mr Dunallan’s, lead you to think every body bad, however amiable they may appear to be? Do you really believe that, if we knew the hearts of every one, we should find them all bad? For this, I think, is Mr Dunallan’s opinion, and I confess it appears to me a very shocking opinion.’

‘The opinion, as you state it, my love, is certainly not Dunallan’s, at least, not exactly so. Such an opinion supposes the whole world hypocrites, and those who appear most amiable, only most hypocritical. This is not his opinion certainly; it is not even his opinion that we ought to form an unfavourable idea of any one, but upon the most positive proofs that they merit it.’

‘Yet, my dear Madam, both he and his friend Mr Churchill, consider the most perfect goodness to which we can attain, as of no value—at least, so I understand him: but you yourself shall judge of what he says.’

‘I am perfectly acquainted with his sentiments on that subject, my dear Catharine; they are my own. It is, my love, in the sight of a holy God, that he believes and feels that every human creature, however amiable he may appear in the eyes of his equally defective fellow-creatures, must appear worthless and guilty.’

‘Worthless! guilty! Do you not use very strong terms, my dear Madam!’

‘No, my dear love, I use the words of the Bible, which says that the human heart is “desperately wicked.”’

‘Every human heart, Madam?’

‘Yes, my love, no exception is made.’

‘And can you really believe this, Mrs Oswald, and still love your fellow-creatures?’



‘ My fellow-sinners, my Catharine. My belief of this ought, and sometimes does, to a painful degree, increase my love and sympathy for them.’

‘ But I suppose, Madam, the Bible means, that, compared to the perfections of the Divine Being, human nature is weak and insignificant?’

‘ No, my love ; for, though this is assuredly the case, reproaching us on this account would have been unjust. We only deserve censure when we put our powers to an unworthy use, not because those powers are weak and limited. It is a comparison between those rules, given us by God in the Bible, to direct our conduct and affections, and the manner in which we ourselves choose to direct that conduct and those affections, which proves to us that we are naturally inclined to act differently from the will of God, and to feel love and hate, and hope and fear, for those objects which are totally different from those which God commands us to love and hate, and fear, and desire ; but I preach, and will tire you at this late hour.’

‘ Oh no, my dear Madam, I feel the deepest interest in conversation such as this. You seem to think that we naturally incline to disobey the commandments of God ; now I think, if I only knew His will, it would delight me to obey it.’

‘ And is there any difficulty, my love, in knowing that will on every occasion where we have to think or act?’

‘ But I am not conscious of ever having intentionally acted very contrary to that will.’

Mrs Oswald smiled.

‘ Why do you smile, my dear Madam?’ asked Catharine, blushing.

‘ Ah, my love, nothing could prove more forcibly to me, that you have never attempted to make that will the rule of your life. Recollect, my Catharine, the first requisition of that will. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy mind, and all thy strength.” But, good night, my sweet love ; may you be enabled to form just opinions on this most important, most interesting of all subjects.’

Mrs Oswald and Catharine then parted ; but Catharine did not go to sleep. After dismissing Martin, she again returned



to Dunallan's letter; nor did she leave it till reminded of the hour by the dawning day.

Next morning she would gladly have dismissed Martin for another hour when she came to call her, but, recollecting Mrs Oswald's smile the night before, she got up, and though languid and unrested, was ready to appear at the hour of prayers.

This day brought another letter from Dunallan. It was short and hurried, written just before he sailed, but full of such deep and tender concern for her, that Catharine, unable to restrain her tears, retired to her own apartment, to indulge the mingled regret and pleasure it inspired. 'Why did I not know him sooner?' thought she. 'Why did I suffer prejudice to blind me to his character? How lively, how deep must his feelings be, who, in the midst of business of such importance, can find time to write thus kindly—thus sweetly, to a creature whom he can only pity. But perhaps ——.' She read his short letter again. Every word might have been addressed to a sister. It concluded thus: 'Adieu, my sweet, my lovely, and beloved friend.' 'Well, my dear, my excellent, my beloved Dunallan,' thought Catharine, 'whatever are your feelings for me, the aim of my life shall be to deserve your most valued esteem, and when you return, you may perhaps yet be happy in your home.'

With that resolution, Catharine immediately set about that exact scrutiny of her own character, and constant attention to its improvement, which she thought necessary to fit her for a companion to Dunallan. She eagerly began to form rules for spending every moment of her time to advantage, and she determined they should on no account be infringed.

She had, after many alterations and improvements, completed this plan, and commenced the occupation she had proposed for the coming hour; which was to read, with a determination to yield neither to fatigue nor dulness, one of the books recommended by Dunallan. She, however, found it neither dull nor tiresome, but, on the contrary, was reading with very deep interest when a servant came to announce two visitors—Mrs Ruthven and her daughter.

'How vexatious! How troublesome!' exclaimed Catharine, 'Is Mrs Oswald with the ladies?'



‘No, Madam, Mrs Oswald has gone out.’

‘I shall be with them immediately. How provoking,’ continued she, ‘my whole plan destroyed at once. But I know at least how to prevent very frequent visits,’ putting up her books and papers, and leaving them with regret.

Mrs Ruthven’s appearance soon disarmed Catharine of her displeasure. She was a very fine looking old lady, with a pale and interesting countenance.

‘I fear I have interrupted some agreeable occupation, Mrs Dunallan,’ said she, after the first compliments were over.

Catharine hesitated——‘I was only reading, Madam.’

‘But can any occupation be more interesting?’

Catharine smiled, and confessed that she had indeed been very deeply engaged. ‘I fear,’ added she, ‘my looks have betrayed my want of hospitality; the book I was reading ought to have inspired me with very different feelings.’

It was the mild and pleasing expression of Mrs Ruthven’s countenance, joined to a maternal kindness and sweetness of manners, that always reached the heart of the motherless Catharine, which so soon brought her to this frank avowal of her fault.

Mrs Ruthven looked fixedly at her for a moment with more than the common interest which beauty and amiable manners inspire, and then sighing deeply, turned her eyes to a portrait of the last Mrs Dunallan, which hung on the opposite side of the room. Catharine followed her eyes: she looked for some moments, and then sighed very deeply.

‘You knew that lady I suppose, Madam,’ said Catharine.

‘I did, and ——’

‘And you remember how different she was from the present lady,’ interrupted Catharine with a playfulness which, however, did not prevent her eyes from filling with tears.

‘I am not yet acquainted with the present lady,’ replied Mrs Ruthven, her eyes also filling, ‘but unless the promise is very false, I must grieve that my departed friend has not lived to possess the one blessing she desired above all others—a daughter. But this is a foolish regret,’ added she, smiling sadly. ‘It is many years since I have been in this house,’ continued Mrs



Ruthven, 'but the happiest hours of my life were spent in it. You will not be surprised, therefore, Mrs Dunallan, at my wishing once more, before I die, to see it, and her who is in future to be its chief ornament and happiness. I know you will tire of an old woman, but ——'

'Oh! do not think so poorly of me,' said Catharine. 'The first desire of my heart is to resemble your friend, Mr Dunallan's mother. There is no person I have desired so much to see, as one who could describe her to me.'

This was a welcome theme to Mrs Ruthven; and when Mrs Oswald, an hour after, returned from her walk, she was surprised to meet, at the entrance of the house, Catharine, holding in hers, the hand of the infirm old lady, while she supported her with her arm thrown round her waist, and listening so eagerly to her as they walked, that she did not even observe Mrs Oswald's approach.

After a cordial embrace on the part of Mrs Ruthven and Mrs Oswald, Catharine and her infirm companion proceeded in their interesting conversation, leaving Mrs Oswald to entertain poor Miss Ruthven, whom Catharine had entirely overlooked.

'I wish once more,' said Mrs Ruthven, 'to visit that spot where my departed friend so often charmed me by her sweet and heavenly conversation. She always succeeded in warming my cold and worldly feelings by the ardour and purity of her piety. Though many years younger than I was, she had got far before me in her course. The world had become nothing to her, though still fitted to adorn it. She knew its vanity, and longed to leave it; while she acted as if its duties were her delight.'

'But,' added Catharine, 'did she not wish to live on her son's account?'

'He had been taken from her,' replied Mrs Ruthven. 'She knew his father would leave no attempt untried to destroy the early lessons of piety she had attempted to impress on his young mind—this was her severest trial; but she had learned in a wonderful degree to join the most unwearied exertions, where human exertions could avail, to the most perfect submission and confidence in the Divine will, where those exertions were fruitless. "Perhaps when I am gone," she used to say to me, "Mr Dun-



allan may think more favourably of my principles ; at least he will lose his dread of them, and endeavour no further to eradicate the impressions I have attempted to make on the mind of my child. I have committed him to God, who, I feel almost confident, will answer the prayers I have offered up, ever since his birth, for his best interests. God is my witness, who gave me the desire, that to see him truly religious, to see him even the most lowly gifted servant of my Lord, would delight me a thousand times more, than to see him, without religion, the most exalted of human beings. God has formed him all that the fondest or vainest mother could wish ; and when His own best time comes, He will impart to him that living principle which will direct all his powers to the honour and glory of the Giver, and then he must be happy." Her prayers have indeed been answered,' continued Mrs Ruthven ; ' I trust that those she so ardently offered up for you, my dear Mrs Dunallan, may be equally so.'

' For me ! ' repeated Catharine.

' Yes, for you. She knew the plans formed by her husband and Lord Dunallan to unite their families ; and foreseeing that those plans were likely to succeed, she felt and prayed for you with the tenderness of a mother.'

Catharine was much moved, and walked on in silence. At last, guided by Mrs Ruthven, they stopt at the very spot where Dunallan had chosen to spend his last evening before he left Arnmore. Catharine had visited this spot daily since that time—it was indeed her favourite resort ; and when Mrs Ruthven stopt, she inquired, with much emotion, ' if that had been the favourite retreat of Mr Dunallan's mother ? '

' It was her chosen retreat,' replied Mrs Ruthven, ' where she enjoyed that solitude and communion with Heaven which were too often interrupted within doors, by the strange caprices of her husband.' Mrs Ruthven looked mournfully around. ' How lovely ! How flourishing ! ' exclaimed she, ' while she who planned and arranged all these beauties is ——'

' Is surrounded by what is far more glorious and beautiful than this,' interrupted Catharine, pressing the hand she held in hers. ' That reminds me of her,' said Mrs Ruthven, smiling



sadly. 'She who felt as a mother for you, my sweet young friend, hated every thing like gloom; and used to say to me, when overpowered by the lowness of my naturally weak spirits, that she would not suffer me to be melancholy when I knew the true source of joy and happiness: nor would she allow my imagination to follow those I loved to the horrors of the grave, when, as she said, I was invited to contemplate them amidst the spirits of those made perfect in happiness, as well as purity.'

'Oh! that I did resemble her,' exclaimed Catharine. 'I must tell you, Mrs Ruthven,' continued she, 'the reason why I received you so inhospitably this morning; I had been forming a plan of life for myself in this solitude, where I am determined to remain till Mr Dunallan's return; and I had forgotten that I should have any thing in the world to do but attend to this plan, which only included the attempt to improve my own mind and feelings by the strictest attention to them, and by the assistance of some books recommended to me by Mr Dunallan: and my only other intended occupation was to attend to some institutions for the improvement of his people, which he trusted to me. Now, my dear Madam, as I commenced this plan of mine, by feeling extremely discomposed on hearing of an interruption, which I now find was to give me very great pleasure, I think my plan must be very defective; and I should greatly wish, if the recollections are not too painful to you, to know how your friend, Mr Dunallan's mother, found time to do all she did, for Mrs Oswald quite discourages me by the accounts she has given me. Mrs Oswald, however, was herself early separated by marriage, and always afterwards resided at a distance from Mrs Dunallan, and only tells me what she heard from others.'

'I shall be most happy, my dear young friend, to tell you all you wish to know on this subject,' replied Mrs Ruthven; 'and I feel grateful for the confidence you have placed in me respecting your very natural little disappointment this morning, when interrupted by my visit. I admire your design of forming a plan. I also very much approve of your intention to remain entirely at home during Mr Dunallan's absence; so much so, that I shall not even ask you to visit me, much as I should prize



such a visit; but you must make no exceptions, or you will give offence in a county where Mr Dunallan's family has long been one of the first consequence; but before I go farther, I believe, my dear Mrs Dunallan, it will be best to tell you frankly some things you ought to know. One is, that Mr Dunallan's religious opinions are greatly ridiculed in this giddy and censorious county. And another is, that you are universally supposed to be shut up here with Mrs Oswald by his desire, that you may in his absence be instructed by her in those dreadfully gloomy principles; and that you are very miserable. I should perhaps have shrunk from repeating this silly gossip, had I not heard from several of the people who have visited you here, that you looked very wretched, and seemed sad when they went away, but never proposed their staying; and that you told them it was impossible you should return their visits, with such moving expressions of regret, that they were quite grieved for you.'

'How absurd!' exclaimed Catharine with indignation.

'I should certainly not have repeated all this, my dear,' resumed Mrs Ruthven, 'had I not perceived by your look of perfect health and peace of mind, and from the glow which followed the mention of your Mr Dunallan's name, that it was absurd.'

Catharine blushed and turned away. It was painful to her to know that she so evidently betrayed feelings which she had not avowed even to herself did exist.

'Forgive me if I pain you, my dear Mrs Dunallan,' continued Mrs Ruthven, 'but during this dear friend's absence, I think I am not mistaken in believing you would be willing, even at the expense of being teased with an old woman's cautions and advice, to preserve his character as far as possible from those aspersions which the profession of uncommon strictness of principle always provokes, until time, and a blameless consistency of conduct, prove the sincerity of the profession.'

'Most assuredly,' replied Catharine, 'this would be my first wish. Tell me only, my dearest Madam, what I ought to do. Oh! if you knew how much happiness I already have lost by listening to such aspersions! but that is past. What must I do, dear Mrs Ruthven, to preserve to Mr Dunallan during his



absence, that respect, that veneration, I know he so justly merits?’

‘Show, my dear young friend, that you yourself feel it,’ replied Mrs Ruthven, ‘and that you are happy; and above all, that Mr Dunallan’s strictness of religious principle is respected by you; and as far as you have really adopted his opinions, openly avow that you have. I believe, too,’ added Mrs Ruthven, ‘that you must admit a little more hospitality into your plan, rather than have Mr Dunallan considered a tyrant, who has forbidden you either to leave home or to receive visitors.’

‘Oh, yes,’ replied Catharine, ‘I shall now receive all who choose to visit me, and make myself as agreeable as I possibly can; but then adieu to all my plans of improvement.’

‘Why so, my dear?’

‘Because I could see very plainly that those people who have already visited me, only required the slightest invitation to prolong their stay; and I must either give this invitation in future, or confirm the belief that I am imprisoned here by Mr Dunallan.’

‘Well, my dear, but it is possible to do both.’

‘True,’ replied Catharine; ‘I had almost forgotten that you were to tell me how Mr Dunallan’s mother contrived to do all she wished to do, with so little time at her own disposal.’

‘Well,’ replied Mrs Ruthven, smiling, ‘I shall begin by asking—are you an early riser?’

‘Sometimes,’ replied Catharine, ‘when I have any thing sufficiently interesting to induce me. At present I am called at eight, because I devote half an hour to reading books, chosen for me by Mr Dunallan, before I do any thing else; and I meet Mrs Oswald to read to the servants at nine.’

‘Well,’ replied Mrs Ruthven, ‘Mr Dunallan’s mother only rose about an hour earlier.’

‘An hour earlier!’

‘Yes, when in health; and to this hour, or two hours which were her own in the morning, she has often told me she owed all the happiness she possessed.’

‘How so? dear Madam.’

‘I shall tell you, my dear, how she spent those hours. She



passed them chiefly on her knees, examining her heart in the presence of her God—its every motive—its every desire; and comparing these motives and desires with the will of God, declared in the Scriptures, which lay before her always as she knelt, she learnt that will so perfectly, and the indissoluble union between obedience to its dictates, and the peace and happiness of the mind, that she used to say those morning hours were as necessary and indispensable to her soul's health as food was to that of her body. 'Some young people,' continued Mrs Ruthven, 'who sincerely desire to serve their Creator, give themselves much labour, which brings no return of good, by attempting to do many things, while they remain ignorant of their own hearts, and comparatively so also of the Scriptures, which alone can guide them aright in the way of salvation. They read other books on the subject, they puzzle themselves with difficulties, and they forget that their Lord has said, "Without me ye can do nothing." Mrs Dunallan, on the contrary, read few books on religious subjects but the Bible; and simply believing its declaration, that we are incapable of ourselves even to think a good thought; and, on the other hand, believing as simply the promise of a new nature to those who ask it aright, she applied in humble confidence to her Saviour for that new nature; and while thus employing the means appointed by himself—reading with an ardent desire to comprehend and obey—praying for the power—examining her heart and soul in His presence, with the single wish that they might be wholly and unreservedly devoted to Him, she felt that promised peace which passeth understanding, and cannot be described. She returned to the world tranquil and serene; she had reposed her cares on that arm which supported the universe; she had fixed her supreme love on the same glorious being; she had implored His aid to preserve her in that line of duty which was pleasing to himself; and, in her continually difficult and trying circumstances, no voice for many, many years before her death was ever heard to speak of her but in terms of praise and admiration. It seemed indeed as if the promise of the prophet had been fulfilled to her, "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the



left." She was the life of every society, though she generally contrived to give a more grave and rational turn to the conversation, than many of her husband's friends would have relished in another; but her character was so well known, and at the same time, her anxiety for the real interest and happiness of every fellow creature, was so evident, and so sincerely earnest, that those who did not abandon their vices and irregular habits, yet candidly avowed to her their belief that goodness alone could produce happiness, and seemed to feel an unaccountable pleasure in describing to her the dark and melancholy thoughts which sometimes embittered their calmer hours. In short, my dear young friend, this most amiable of human beings was so, because she received the power from on high—a power which she had learnt so greatly to value, and to connect in her thoughts so intimately with happiness, that in seeking the one, she felt she was also seeking the other; and therefore she began each day by devoting its first hours to this pursuit. The events of the day she considered as guided, or overruled by the providence of her God and Saviour; and she received whatever was presented to her, of happiness or disappointment, as from a father who knew her nature, and what it required to improve it, better than she herself did.' Mrs Ruthven paused, and looked round at Catharine, who had leant back while she spoke—she was in tears.

'Why this, my dear young friend?'

'I cannot tell,' replied Catharine, smiling, and wiping them away, 'I really cannot tell; but I wish I knew the *happiness* of religion; as yet I only know it as a restraint, or, at most, I feel admiration for the character of the Divine Being through the beauties of His creation.'

'Follow on to know the Lord, and you shall know Him, my sweet young friend,' replied Mrs Ruthven, with great tenderness; 'and believe me, who am a weak-spirited sinful traveller to that better country, that the knowledge of Him, even to the weakest and most unwilling to trust in His goodness, is a source of peace and happiness which, though it may not save them, through their own weakness and culpable want of faith in His promises, from many sins and sorrows, yet is so superior to all the world



can give, that when once attained, we scarcely need any other proof of its being the gift of Heaven.'

'Thank you, my dear Madam,' replied Catharine. 'I believe all you say, and hope I shall one day understand it. In the meantime I shall attempt to imitate Mr Dunallan's angel mother, at least in studying the will of God on my bended knees, the first moments of every day. But here comes Mrs Oswald. We must, my dear Madam, resume this conversation again.'

'Certainly, my sweet Mrs Dunallan; it can scarcely be so delightful to you as it is to me.'

Mrs Ruthven remained two days longer at Arnmore, and Catharine learnt much of *her* character, whose steps she now so ardently wished to follow. On going away, Mrs Ruthven offered to leave her daughter with Catharine, to enliven in some degree, a solitude, which appeared to her too severe for one so young, and so evidently formed to love and be beloved in society. Catharine felt her kindness; and though Miss Ruthven had excited little interest in her feelings, she accepted the offer with gratitude. But though she attempted to make the time pass agreeably to her guest, she could with difficulty at times command her wandering thoughts, while conversing with the amiable, gentle, but common-place, Miss Ruthven.

---

### CHAPTER XIII.

THE morning after Mrs Ruthven's departure, Catharine was called an hour earlier than heretofore, and began that examination of her own heart, which she had determined should be the first occupation of each day; but she scarcely knew where, or how to begin. She knelt down with the Bible open before her, and became overpowered with a kind of awe quite new to her. 'How very serious is this occupation!' thought she, when she recollected Mrs Ruthven's description of the manner in which Dunallan's mother had performed it. She had examined every motive and desire of her heart, as if in the presence of her



Creator. Catharine attempted to do the same. She read, and prayed that she might understand. She reflected on her past life, and compared it with what she knew of the precepts of Christianity, and she saw, that in that pure light it appeared only a succession of trifling pursuits, and a continued indulgence in all that her heart desired, without any reference to the Being who demanded the first place in that heart. She rose from her knees humbled and dejected; and, for some days, though she persevered in her morning task, yet she felt no increase of happiness; on the contrary, she was at times really miserable. Gradually, however, as she became more acquainted with Scripture, she perceived that peace of mind did not consist in ignorance of the strictness it required as she had been tempted to think, when, on comparing her heart and life with its demands, she found, that the more she knew them, the more was she convinced that she never could perform them. She had said to herself repeatedly, 'No human creature can; the sincere attempt must be all that is required;' but she could not rest satisfied with this conclusion, because she could find no satisfactory answer to the question which necessarily followed, 'Why were rules so impracticable given to direct us?' But as she read on, in simple earnestness of mind, the Christian system opened more fully to her understanding. She read Dunallan's short sketch of its outlines with the deepest attention; she conversed freely with Mrs Oswald, who greatly assisted her in this search after truth. Catharine's was not a mind that could acquiesce submissively in remaining ignorant on any subject that had once excited her curiosity; and on one of such vast importance as that which now occupied her thoughts, she sought information with unwearied ardour, and she gradually, but clearly and convincingly, discovered the meaning of those parts of Scripture which had at first led her to despair of ever truly becoming a Christian.

'Ah, my dear Mrs Oswald,' said she, one evening after a deeply interesting conversation with that lady, 'how well I now comprehend that passage which you have so often attempted to make me attend to in vain, while I was in despair at my own weakness, and the strictness of the precepts of Scripture. I



now see that these pure precepts, that strict law, is intended as "a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," without whom we cannot perform one of its dictates in a right spirit. You at last said, my dear Mrs Oswald, my true, best friend, that experience alone, my own experience, must teach me this; and you said most truly indeed. I see all with a clearness that surprises myself. I see that we require an atonement for our past lives, and for the evil that still pollutes the hearts and actions of the most perfect. I feel that we require a new heart before we can see this, or be disposed to ask power to obey the will of God.'

'Yes, my dear love,' replied Mrs Oswald, 'my prayers for you, Edward's prayers for you, have been answered. How will he rejoice to know that you have thus earnestly, thus perseveringly, sought that which it was the first desire of his heart you should obtain.'

Catharine sighed deeply: 'He would scarcely believe the reality, my dear Madam, if he saw how little influence it has upon me.'

Mrs Oswald smiled: 'He would be satisfied, my love, if he saw you, as I see you, struggling against your natural temper and acquired habits.'

Catharine had, indeed, for some time been struggling constantly against the most powerful and confirmed of all her habits, which was a total indifference to all around her,—excepting, perhaps, the individual or two who might, among numbers, excite some interest in her feelings. She had been so long accustomed to be courted and amused by all, that she absolutely forgot the presence of those, who did not in some manner excite her attention by their superior powers of pleasing. A slight hint of this from Mrs Oswald had pointed it out to her attention, and made it one of the subjects of her morning scrutiny. Ever since her conversation with Mrs Ruthven, Catharine had obliged herself to invite those who visited her, either to remain or return; and very soon her house became the favourite resort of the younger females of the county. Catharine was the idol of the day; but this afforded her no gratification, because she valued very little the admiration or affection of those with whom she associated from a sense of duty. Mrs Oswald's hint, however, led her to



examine into the cause of this want of interest in her young fellow-creatures ; and this examination led her to discover many hitherto unsuspected faults in her heart and temper. She watched these with increasing care, and her improvement was proportionably rapid, and, consequently, her internal tranquillity increased in an equal degree. Instead of that lassitude and want of interest which hitherto had, at times, accompanied all her pursuits and all her pleasures, she now felt a degree of interest and enjoyment quite new to her. She lived to her Creator, and she felt that peace and sweet gaiety of heart which can exist only where all the feelings and passions of the soul are subjected to the influence of religion. One severe disappointment during this period, had taught her that religion is not a guide only, but also a source of the sweetest consolation. Elizabeth had found it impossible to come to Arnmore. Her husband's professional duties had called him to London, and for various reasons it was proper she should accompany him. Catharine felt this disappointment severely ; but one still more trying now awaited her. The time arrived at which Dunallan had led her to expect she would hear from him, and no letter came. Catharine became more anxious every day, every hour, though Mrs Oswald discovered many plausible reasons for the delay. At last Catharine received a letter from Walderford, informing her that he had heard from Dunallan, and thought it possible his letters might have reached him before Catharine received hers. Dunallan was well, and succeeding even beyond his hopes in the object of his mission ; at least all promised fair ; and he hoped he should be able to return home much sooner than he had expected. Walderford had transcribed the passage—Dunallan called it 'his delightful home.'

Catharine returned thanks to Heaven, with the most heartfelt gratitude, for this relief from anxiety ; for she had been unable to restrain her imagination from picturing every thing dreadful that might have befallen Dunallan.

Still, however, day passed away after day, and week after week, and no letter from Dunallan, either to Catharine or Mrs Oswald. Another letter from Mr Walderford announced his having again heard from Dunallan—still well and successful, but extremely



occupied, even harassed with business. 'But,' added Mr Walderford in his letter, 'Dunallan, I have reason to hope, may now return to England in a few months.'

Catharine still felt grateful to Heaven for the preservation of his health; but the certainty that Dunallan had at least become indifferent to her, required all her fortitude to support.

Still another letter to Mr Walderford, and none to Catharine or Mrs Oswald.

Mrs Oswald had herself at last ceased to account for his silence, and looked grave and anxious. She had written constantly to Dunallan, and had described her own and Catharine's disappointment at never hearing from him; and his neglecting to reply to her letters at first surprised and then alarmed her.

At last the long-looked-for letters did arrive. Catharine retired with hers to her own apartment. She dared not trust herself to read it in the presence of the young party now assembled at Arnmore. She trembled so violently she could scarcely break the seal. She at last, however, unfolded this long, long expected letter. One page, and the half of another, was written. She dared scarcely read.

'I have just received your letter, my dear Catharine, and answer it immediately.' 'My letter!' exclaimed Catharine, 'My twenty letters!' for she had not ceased writing to him, though, of late, colder in her expressions of esteem and gratitude. She read on—

'You say you continue to find pleasure in the occupations I recommended to you. Mrs Oswald also assures me that you seem happy. I endeavour, therefore, to banish my uneasiness on your account. You know there is nothing which I should not feel it my duty and happiness to attempt, which could in the least degree add to your comfort or even amusement; unfortunate and most guilty as I feel myself to be, in having deprived you of the power of choice in the most important of all your earthly concerns, I would not so often repeat this, did I not wish to impress on your mind how greatly I feel this consideration adds to your every other claim on me. I feel your generosity in assuring me that you are not unhappy, and your goodness in desiring to please your absent friend in all you do. Be assured



I am not ungrateful ; yet I wish you more to follow your own inclinations. Whatever you do will most please me, if I think it has interested or amused you.

‘ My friend has not deceived you in saying, I may be home sooner than I expected when I left you ; but, dear Catharine, excepting, if possible, to discover your wishes more perfectly, my coming home, be assured, will make no difference. I ask only to be regarded as your friend, as the person on earth most bound to watch over your happiness, and who must ever be

‘ Your sincere, your devoted,

‘ EDWARD DUNALLAN.’

Catharine read and re-read this letter. She compared it with his last—how changed ! Yet it was not unkind ; it was, as he ever was, feeling and anxious for her happiness, even to a degree that lessened his own ; but his manner of writing to her was too, too plainly changed. What could he mean, particularly the last part of his letter ? ‘ I have expressed myself too kindly to him,’ thought she, blushing as she thought, ‘ and this is the way he has chosen to show me that he thinks so. A few weeks’ absence has proved to him that the interest produced by pity for my unhappy situation cannot last, and he fears my foolish affections will be fixed on him in a way he cannot return.’

Catharine threw herself on her knees, and wept bitterly. She prayed for submission to the Divine will—to all its dispensations, however painful, however mortifying. ‘ I require to be mortified—I know it,’ continued she ; ‘ enable me to love the hand that chastens to improve. I would fix my affections on earth—raise them to thyself, and teach me to believe in the love I cannot see in this bitter draught.’

Catharine remained more than an hour alone, and then returned to Mrs Oswald and her guests, perfectly composed, though pale and dejected.

Mrs Oswald said nothing of the contents of her letter, and Catharine made no inquiries ; she perceived, however, that Mrs Oswald was remarkably grave, and treated her with more than her usual tenderness. Catharine dreaded that she had something painful to learn regarding Dunallan, and earnestly



examined Mrs Oswald's countenance, to discover what she had to fear. Mrs Oswald seemed to read her thoughts, and held out the letter she had received, saying, 'I have no secrets, my love.' Catharine took the letter reluctantly, but Mrs Oswald pressed it upon her; and inviting some young ladies who were present, to go with her and examine some newly arrived plants, Catharine remained alone.

Dunallan's letter to his aunt was kindly, but not cheerfully written. He did not mention Catharine till near the close of the letter. He expressed pleasure at hearing she was not unhappy; 'She is young to every thing,' continued he. 'Novelty has still many charms for her; and if the disposition, you, my dear Madam describe, increases, I hope it may be possible to preserve her at least from unhappiness during those years in which hope and imagination are so vivid, that the quiet and rational enjoyments which I alone can offer her, appear irksome and insipid; after that period, there may, perhaps, be some real happiness in store for both of us;—but no more of this. Happiness, my dear aunt, I need not remind *you*, is not to be often found on this side the grave. If I could feel innocent in the part I have acted towards her!—but that is past now beyond recall.' This was all that was said of Catharine; but there was a degree of impatience to be home, expressed in this letter, which surprised her. 'Why should he wish to be home? What happiness can home offer to him?' thought she. 'But I always regard myself as all that he possesses at home. How absurd! What, to such a man as Dunallan, is one private connection! If his feeling heart could be satisfied that I was happy, he would soon forget my existence. I only am a load to him—a cause of pain and anxiety. This shall not be. I will write so as to convince him, that I at least know that the source of the purest happiness is not in this world—not even in possessing the affections of the most perfect beings it contains; and I trust, that, in seeking happiness from its only true source, the liveliness of hope and imagination will be so directed, as to convince him that it increases that happiness a thousand-fold.'

Catharine returned her letter to Mrs Oswald without making any remark, who received it also in silence.



At night, when the rest of the party had retired to their apartments, Catharine followed Mrs Oswald, 'Will you admit me for a few moments, my dearest Madam?'

Mrs Oswald drew her affectionately into her bosom. 'My beloved Catharine, I know what you must have suffered during this day of disappointment. But, my love, I am completely persuaded that there is some mystery hangs over this long silence of Dunallan's, and this strange alteration in the style of his letters—some mistake, that only requires explanation.'

Catharine kissed Mrs Oswald tenderly, and then drew away from her. For a few moments she could not speak. Mrs Oswald herself wept.

'My dear kind Mrs Oswald,' said Catharine at last, 'this has indeed been a day of bitter disappointment to me; but I think you will believe that I neither deceive myself nor you, when I assure you, that it is not so insupportably severe as I dreaded it would be, when I first read that long-looked-for letter. The idea, that every event of my life is ordered exactly as it happens, by a tender and merciful Father, is almost as powerfully present to my thoughts and feelings as the painful contents of these letters; and the idea is so sweetly soothing—so elevating, that I cannot say I am very unhappy; indeed, what I feel, though it is unlike common pleasure, is superior to it. But, my dear Madam, I do not believe there is any mystery where you suppose there is; and I am now come to ask you to make me a promise, without which I cannot feel satisfied.'

'If the promise is, not to attempt to unravel this mystery, my dearest Catharine, do not ask me, for I cannot give it.'

'Then, my dear Madam, I must submit, and indeed be most wretched.'

'How, my love?'

'Because, my dear Mrs Oswald, I cannot help feeling certain, that this idea about mystery is quite groundless. You will lead Mr Dunallan to suppose that I expect more of his regard than he can bestow; this will make him consider himself unjust, and then he will be unhappy; and this is the only thing I now really dread, and which would, I am sure, make me miserable.'

'Ah, my Catharine,' replied Mrs Oswald, 'would you, from



such false refinements, such trifling delicacies, suffer some injurious mistake, some deception, to proceed, which may in the end prove fatal to the happiness of both !’

‘But, my dear Madam, how is it possible there can be any mistake? Mr Dunallan must have received our letters—it is plain he has, from some passages in his. The only mistake is this, that I have supposed he felt more tenderness for me than he does or can. You, my dearest, kindest Mrs Oswald, have assisted me in this delusion, and Mr Dunallan wishes to undeceive us.’

Mrs Oswald shook her head. ‘What romantic delicacy, my love; it is unworthy of you.’

‘But, Madam,’ replied Catharine, rather hurt, ‘It is I who must suffer either way; may I not at least have my choice?’

‘Certainly, my love; forgive me, if, in my anxiety for your happiness, I seem to forget your right to dictate in what so nearly concerns yourself.’

‘Forgive me, my too kind Mrs Oswald; I may be, I probably am, wrong; but will you at least wait till I have had time to think over this matter?’

‘In the way that Dunallan’s mother used to examine every subject?’ asked Mrs Oswald, smiling kindly.

‘Yes,’ replied Catharine.

‘Surely, my love; your decision, after such an examination, will entirely satisfy me.’

Catharine never found such difficulty in deciding any question. There was surely no *good reason* against Mrs Oswald’s making the simple inquiry she wished; yet, when obliged next morning to join that lady, and her other guests, Catharine had been unable to form any opinion which satisfied her on the subject. After breakfast, Catharine, who had never suffered visitors or any other cause to prevent her from attending to those institutions entrusted to her by Dunallan, prepared to go and visit her school. Mrs Oswald offered to accompany her; and, on their way, inquired whether she had formed her opinion on the subject of their conversation the preceding night.

Catharine hesitated. ‘Is it necessary that one should be able to give a convincing reason for every difference of opinion,



Madam?' said she at last; 'for I confess that after I have thought over, and studied this subject almost ever since we parted last night, I have been unable to find one reason which you will admit, for differing from you; yet I still do so as much as ever. May feeling, or delicacy, or instinct, or any thing you choose to call it, not decide on some subjects?'

Mrs Oswald smiled. 'I see that you have come to the same conclusion as I have, my dear Catharine. I have found it in vain to try the merits of this subject by any rules but those of feeling; and I remember when I should have felt exactly as you do; and, therefore, for the present at least, I must just do as you wish.'

'My dear Mrs Oswald, a thousand thanks! This is too good! Oh, how I thank you!'

'But you will write Dunallan, my love!'

'Yes, I ought—I must; but I know not how ——.'

'Write naturally, my Catharine, write just as you feel; I also shall write by this evening's post; our letters must go together, since I am to say nothing about you. Your letter may cost you some thought; I shall attend your school for you, if you choose to return and write it now; your guests will expect you to join them soon.'

Catharine gratefully accepted of Mrs Oswald's offer. She felt that her letter would indeed cost her much thought. She dreaded betraying the slightest feeling of disappointment; and she equally dreaded any expression escaping her, that friendship alone might not dictate. After many changes, and still unsatisfied with what she had written, she was obliged to conclude, and join her guests.

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

CALMER feelings gradually took the place, in Catharine's mind, of those painful emotions which Dunallan's letter had occasioned, but with intervals of extreme sadness. She attempted to banish the idea of Dunallan altogether; but she was not at all



times either so completely on her guard against the recollections that stole into her mind, as to be prepared to struggle against their admission, or so wise as to turn from those dreams of happiness, the indulgence of which always added pain to the reality. The season, too, added to her sadness. It was now towards the end of autumn; the cold evenings, and sometimes sweeping blasts, which rapidly thinned the woods of their foliage, seemed to announce the near approach of winter; while the bright sunshine, and freshness of the air, made walking still delightful in the early part of the day. Catharine, from her childhood, had been deeply alive to the influence of nature; her spirits had always been subject to its power in an uncommon degree; and now she yielded without resistance to its impression. Most of the time not taken up in those occupations which she considered as sacred duties, or in company, was spent in wandering alone through the beautiful scenery of Arnmore. She did not feel that religion forbade the soft melancholy inspired by a view of nature in its decay; on the contrary she found that, between nature and religion, there was an analogy so strong and so perfect, that the one was the most exquisitely pleasing and beautiful illustration of the other; and she sought, as her greatest pleasure, those scenes which, suiting the deepest feelings of her soul, so elevated those feelings as to make all enjoyments unconnected with religion appear to be of no value whatever. Her mind became stronger from exertion; and though, when she sometimes turned her thoughts to the future, her heart sickened at the disappointment of all her hopes, she, at other times, could look forward with composure, regarding life in its real light, as a preparation for another state of existence—a mere journey, in which it was of little consequence what happened to us, provided we did not deviate from the path which led to a happy immortality.

Another letter from Dunallan destroyed for a time her tranquillity and strength of mind. This letter was even more cold and formal than the last: it was almost cruelly so, Catharine thought; and a feeling of resentment made her at first determine not to reply to it. She, however, overcame this feeling, and answered it immediately.



Another letter soon followed ; not so very cold as the former, but shorter, and, if possible, less expressive of interest.

Catharine now began to dread Dunallan's return more than any thing that was likely to happen to her. She felt a painful apprehension, indeed almost a certainty, that a change so complete, from, at least, tender interest, to total indifference, or even dislike, must have some deeper cause than the dread of her becoming too fondly attached to him. The idea of Aspasia sometimes haunted her, as a vision of every thing dreadful ; but she would not suffer a thought to dwell on such a subject ; it seemed ungenerous, unjust, injurious to Dunallan—it was misery to herself. She saw, however, that Mrs Oswald in vain attempted to assume her usual cheerfulness. She often forgot that Catharine was present ; and, stopping her work, would sit for many minutes in deep and apparently painful thought ; then, recollecting herself, would begin to talk in a tone of gaiety too evidently forced to deceive. This thoughtfulness rather increased after receiving a letter from Dunallan, for which she had expressed considerable impatience, but which seemed to have entirely disappointed her.

Catharine now dreaded that Dunallan had met with some amiable being like himself, who had taught him to feel more keenly the misery of that hateful tie which bound him to herself for ever. Yet she thought that his principles, imperfectly as she knew them, ought to have secured him from this danger, or at least from the indulgence of it. But all regarding him was now involved in an uncertainty so painful, that Catharine wished to banish him completely from her thoughts, and to leave her fate entirely to the disposal of that Being who alone had any control over the future. This was a difficult task ; but other feelings for Dunallan began to gain ground. Her admiration and tenderness for him had been greatly heightened, from having found his character so totally different from what her imagination had represented him, and from feeling that she had joined in the unjust and injurious opinion which those around her had formed of him. His manner and conduct to herself had also won her affections sufficiently to make his excellence of character a delightful subject of contemplation ; but now that



a cloud hung over him, her first feelings in regard to him, in some degree, resumed their influence. She believed him good, but she thought him at least singular.

‘I see, my dear Catharine,’ said Mrs Oswald to her one day, ‘that your opinion of Dunallan begins to change. I entreat you to struggle against this. I feel quite certain that time will prove that he does not merit less of your esteem than when you parted.’

‘I do struggle, my dear Madam, to form a just opinion of Mr Dunallan,’ replied Catharine, ‘but, in reality, I know very little of him. I met him at first, you know, with a thousand prejudices against him; and though we passed six weeks in the same house, these prejudices continued so powerful, that, though I saw him act, and heard him speak continually in such a way as, on recollection, I feel ought to have overcome those prejudices, he still continued, in my opinion, the same character in a great degree, which my imagination had pictured him. When I accompanied him here, and found him so considerate—so delicate—so generous to myself, and saw him so beloved by you, and all around him, I immediately went to the opposite extreme; and, from the few most engaging, most happy days I then passed in his society, my imagination was forming a character far too perfect to be real.’

‘Possibly it might, my dear; but all I ask is, that, in attempting to form this just opinion, you will leave his present—to me unaccountable, conduct out of the question.’

‘I shall try to do so. If you knew, however, my dear Mrs Oswald, how useful his present coldness has been to me, I believe you would not, on my account at least, regret it.’

‘You have supported it as I should have desired, my Catharine; far better, I confess, than I should have expected.’

‘Ah! Madam, you have not seen my heart; but I know it myself better now. I thought all was right; I thought I had discovered the cause why every pursuit had ended in disappointment, until I attempted those pointed out to me by Mr Dunallan. I supposed they continued to increase in interest, because they aimed at the everlasting improvement of my fellow-creatures; but when first I became convinced that Mr Dunallan



had lost all interest in me and my pursuits, they became irksome to me. I discovered that I had been acting from no higher motives than the hope of his approbation. Now I know better, and have learned how to feel pleasure in fulfilling Mr Dunallan's wishes, without expecting the reward of his approbation, though I still value that also.'

'I rejoice, my Catharine,' replied Mrs Oswald, 'that you have gathered this lesson from any source. It is a sad deception to think we are doing all to please God, when in reality, we are idolizing a fellow-creature. Your future life, my love, will be the more happy for this.'

Catharine was not unhappy now; she had learned to think less of Dunallan. The idea of him, when it did return to her, was always painful, and, even when absent, depressed her spirits; for, if her natural gaiety of heart attempted to return, something painful checked it, and then she recollected Dunallan.

Winter had now closed in, and Catharine was obliged to seek her pleasures and employments chiefly within doors. The weather was wet, cold, and dreary.

Amongst all those who had visited Catharine during the summer and autumn, there were but few persons who had really gained any share of her affections. Amongst these was a young girl, named Helen Graham.

Helen Graham was one of six daughters of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, whose fortune was too limited to allow much to be bestowed on their education; yet whose pride of family led him to dread as the greatest disgrace, any matrimonial connection for his daughters with families in the least degree inferior to his own in antiquity and other similar virtues.

Helen Graham was an uncultivated romantic girl, with the most ardent affections. She had read novels and poetry in abundance, and often had attempted to express her own glowing feelings in rhyme, but would have suffered the torture sooner than that any eye should have seen those indeed very imperfect productions. On first becoming acquainted with Catharine, she had felt overawed by her superiority, and regarded her as a model of the most perfect excellence. Her ease and grace of manners—her beauty—her variety of conversation—her infor-



mation—her acquirements, all were far superior to those of the most admired of her former companions. Catharine, on her part, had remarked the extreme, even painful bashfulness of Helen's manner, when compelled to come into notice, contrasted with the intelligence of her looks, and the expressive energy of her language and manners, when she joined, unconscious of being observed, in general conversation. There was something in this mixture of bashfulness and apparent talent which excited Catharine's interest; she attempted to win Helen to be at her ease with her, and in doing this, treated her with a degree of kindness which Helen soon returned with the most unbounded and devoted affection. Catharine could not be insensible to this real and ardent regard; on the contrary, she returned it with a warmth that surprised herself; for she had supposed that Dunallan's disappointing conduct towards her, had given her affections a chill that they would not recover on this side the grave; but she found, that in the devoted affection of this ardent girl; the fondness of the children, to whom she every day became more tenderly attached; and the maternal interest and kindness of Mrs Oswald, her heart was satisfied.

'I could be content to live during the whole of my pilgrimage on earth in this little society,' said she one evening to Mrs Oswald and Helen after a long winter day, in which snow had been falling without ceasing; 'but I must insist on your leaving us, Helen, very soon, to go to Edinburgh, as your father wishes.'

Helen smiled, 'I cannot go now,' replied she, 'my aunt has set off without me.'

'How! why did she not come for you as I supposed she would?'

'Oh, never mind,' replied Helen, gaily; 'she knew I did not wish to go. I shall now be permitted to remain with you all the winter, if you will allow me to stay.'

'No, indeed, my dear kind Helen.'

'Then I must go home, for my aunt has taken Jane instead of me, and she can have but one of us. Jane wished to go; and there is not a spot in the universe which will ever be so dear to me as this. What is there in Edinburgh that could interest me,



while I thought I might in the very least degree add to your happiness, Catharine?’

‘My dearest Helen, you distress me.’

‘Do you think, Catharine, I should have been married had I gone to Edinburgh?’ asked Helen, playfully, ‘for that is what my father and aunt expect.’

‘Perhaps, my dear Helen, you might have attained to that envied state,’ replied Catharine, smiling, and then sighing deeply.

Helen was shocked at her own forgetfulness, though she only dreaded having reminded Catharine of Dunallan’s absence, which she supposed was the cause of her occasional fits of sadness.

Catharine kissed her cheek affectionately.

‘I believe, my dear Helen, I must be so selfish as to allow you to be happy in your own way, till I can myself take you in search of this husband.’

The time again approached in which Catharine expected to hear from Dunallan; and though his letters now only gave her pain, yet she anxiously looked for their arrival; and as the snow continued to fall, and deepen more and more, she began to dread that the roads might be shut up so as to prevent these letters reaching Mrs Oswald and herself. She at times dreaded Dunallan’s coming unexpectedly himself. At last letters did arrive; Catharine’s hands trembled as she broke the seal; after reading a few lines—

‘He is in England!’ exclaimed she, becoming very pale, then feeling unable to restrain her emotion, she hurried out of the room. When alone, she threw herself on her knees, and spreading Dunallan’s letter before her, ‘Whatever are its contents I shall receive them thus,’ thought she, again beginning to read the still loved characters—

‘My dear Catharine, allow me to return you my grateful thanks for your last letter. Be assured I am most sensible of your goodness, your generosity, in so unweariedly persevering in your attempts to satisfy my wishes regarding those affairs, with which you say I entrusted you. I shall soon, I hope, be able in person to express my gratitude for all the trouble you have taken to please me; and perhaps to convince you that I am not quite



the *exacting* being your letters too plainly tell me you suppose me to be. I arrived in England two days ago, and in London yesterday. I shall not be detained above a day or two, and then propose setting off immediately for Arnmore. May I hope you will receive me still as a friend. I claim nothing in this character but the right of watching over your happiness. I ask nothing more, than that you should believe that I am ever your sincerely attached friend,

‘E. D. DUNALLAN.’

‘And it is I who deserve blame, then!’ thought Catharine, when she had finished Dunallan’s letter. ‘I have disgusted by my very desire to fulfil his wishes. Surely, surely, Dunallan, this is a little unfair; but I care not. If you feel more satisfied in believing it is so, I shall not vindicate myself, but submit. Oh! that I could fix all my affections where there is no injustice, no disappointment.’

This letter, however, was kind compared to Dunallan’s last; and Catharine felt, while she went over it, that, mixed as they were with unjust complaints, his expressions of interest, and the expectation of so soon again meeting him, too powerfully revived those feelings of tenderness which she had of late supposed almost entirely overcome. Those feelings she now greatly dreaded; and, earnestly praying for power to resist them, she determined to return to Mrs Oswald, that she might escape from the many softening recollections which crowded on her memory.

Mrs Oswald was alone when Catharine entered the room; her countenance expressed the utmost satisfaction.

‘Now, my dear love,’ exclaimed she, embracing Catharine tenderly, ‘I shall again see you happy. All will now be explained.’

‘But, my dear Mrs Oswald, I hope you still consider your promise to me sacred. You will ask no explanation?’

‘No, no, my love, I shall not find that necessary. Dunallan has no concealments; he will himself wish to explain everything.’

Mrs Oswald seemed to enjoy a new existence.

‘Do you think, my dear Madam,’ said Catharine, after looking earnestly towards a window for some moments, ‘Don’t you think the snow has fallen so deep, that perhaps the cross road



between Arnmore and the great road may be shut up? Should it not be cleared away? Mr Dunallan may be stopped.'

'Surely, my love, if it is necessary.'

'I think, my dear Mrs Oswald, as he has left everything to my care, I ought not to suffer so chilling an impediment to meet him on his return home. His feelings require no addition to their coldness, I fear, at least for some of the inmates of his Arnmore. Shall I order the snow to be cleared away, my dear Madam?'

'Surely, my Catharine, and also endeavour to clear away those unkind thoughts of my poor Edward from your own heart.'

'Your *poor* Edward!' repeated Catharine, smiling sadly, 'I wish I could banish those thoughts of him which at this moment force themselves upon me.' She turned away to conceal her tears, but quickly recovering herself, 'We must not delay, my dear Madam; let us send for Mr Gray directly, and tell him to have the road opened.' She laid her hand on the bell-rope, but stopt; and smiling faintly said, 'I must not tell them their master is just coming home with tears in my eyes. They may, perhaps, see me look still more sad, however, after he is come,' added she, pulling the cord.

A servant appeared.

'John, Mr Dunallan is to be home in a day or two.' The man's countenance brightened with joy. 'My master, Madam!'

'Yes, John, and we wish to see Mr Gray immediately.'

John hurried away to tell the joyful tidings to the other servants, and their happy exclamations reached even the apartment where Catharine was. Mrs Oswald looked at her; Catharine smiled sadly. 'I know, my dear Madam, how much he is beloved,' said she.

Mr Gray soon appeared, his countenance radiant with joy. 'What happy news, Madam! this will be a joyful day for Arnmore!'

'Yes, Mr Gray; and I wish to ask you whether it will be necessary to clear the roads?'

'I thought of that, Madam, the moment John came to fetch me, and sent off a man to examine. I shall, if you please, now go myself.'

Catharine begged he would.



Soon all was bustle. Every servant in the house seemed anxious to assist in hastening Dunallan's return, by clearing away every impediment. In a short time, all the snow near the house was out of sight; and that on the road in the avenue was quickly disappearing. Catharine became more and more sad in the general joy, and retired to her own apartment to conceal a melancholy so unsuitable. She partook, however, in the restlessness which pervaded the whole family. She could engage in nothing but dreams of the future, which were at times too painful, and at other times too softening, to be indulged. When obliged again to join the others, the happy looks of Mrs Oswald, Helen's congratulations, and the boundless joy of the children, overcame both her sadness and her apprehensions for the future, at least for a time; but nothing could banish for long the idea of her first meeting with Dunallan. She thought if that was once over, she would know everything; his manner, then, would teach her all she had to hope or fear.

Catharine never felt more relieved, than when the hour arrived to separate for the night. She longed for the undisturbed quiet of her own apartment; but here she had to meet the joyful exclamations of Martin, whose unusual loquacity, and delighted looks, she felt unwilling for a time to check.

'Never did I see such joy,' said Martin, 'and it is chiefly on your account, Ma'am.'

'On my account!'

'Yes, Ma'am; the people say you will now be rewarded for all your goodness to them in Mr Dunallan's absence; and for your charities to his poor, and your care of the young. I am sure I do not know, Ma'am, whether they love you or Mr Dunallan most; but, to be sure, they say you were made for each other, and to be a blessing to all around you.'

Catharine only sighed, and soon dismissing Martin, attempted to collect her ideas, and prepare for the future, whatever it might bring. She had long before this made herself fully acquainted with the duties prescribed in Scripture to those in the married state. 'These must now be my rule,' thought she, 'whatever Dunallan's conduct to me may be.' She again recalled those duties, and prayed earnestly for power to fulfil her



part, independently of Dunallan's performance of his. Her mind became composed, and she began to perceive those mercies in her present situation, which she had now learnt to remark, were always mixed in the cup of suffering. 'How thankful ought I to feel!' thought she, 'that in my duties there is nothing difficult or revolting to me. I am commanded to love this husband; he might have been such as to excite only disgust; but, on the contrary, my duty is too easy. I am commanded to submit myself to him; this too, is most easy, superior as he is: had he been otherwise, how would my proud heart have rebelled! I may watch unnoticed till I discover his wishes, and then attempt to submit to them, whatever they are.' Catharine wept while she formed this plan for the future; yet there was something not unpleasing in the idea of thus fulfilling the duty of the wife of Dunallan, cold and unkind as she now expected to find him.

Next morning, Catharine again renewed her attempts to gain that composure and self-command she foresaw she would require. She sought them by those means she had never yet found to fail, when perseveringly applied for; and when she again met Mrs Oswald, the calmness, and elevation, and composure of her looks, betrayed the peace she enjoyed.

Mrs Oswald was alone—her countenance brightened. 'My love, your looks delight me; your hour this morning has been happily spent; you have learnt to regard the future with juster expectations.'

'I have been attempting to learn, my dear kind Mrs Oswald, to look for whatever is sent me as an intended blessing, however painful I may feel it, or however humbling to my proud nature.'

'Well, my love, that is best, because you cannot be disappointed.'

After breakfast Catharine went to visit her school. The children themselves had kept the path from thence to the castle free from snow, though the task had not been an easy one, from the frequent showers that had fallen. On this day the wind was high and piercingly cold, and drifted the snow so as to make walking very unpleasant; but Catharine was of too ardent a disposition to be deterred from what she considered a duty by



such impediments; and wrapped in her large cloak, her complexion brilliantly heightened by the cold and exercise, she soon reached her school. The universal joy had also arrived here; the children could scarcely attend, and even their old, and usually grave and silent schoolmistress, seemed to have forgotten everything but Mr Dunallan's return.

‘The children have all learned more than you desired, Madam, that they may show how much they love you; for, if you remember, Madam, you said once, that if they wished to prove that they felt obliged for your kindness, as they said they did, they must do so by being busy good children in Mr Dunallan's absence.’

The children blushed and smiled, and Catharine soon found that their love for her had made them wonderfully busy indeed.

‘But Dunallan will take no interest in all this now!’ thought she, as the girls showed her all they had learnt; then recollecting that the good was equally accomplished by storing the memories of the young creatures around her with the most useful of all knowledge, she mentally thanked Heaven that any cause had produced so good an effect.

Catharine remained longer than usual with her school. When she returned, she retired to her own apartment, and, tranquil and composed, she felt, that even now she could meet Dunallan with little emotion, ‘and in a day or two,’ thought she, ‘I shall be quite prepared for whatever I may have to feel.’

The short day was closing in when she again joined Mrs Oswald in the drawing room. It had continued stormy and gloomy. Mrs Oswald and the children stood at a window. Catharine joined them.

‘The people continue to clear away the snow, as it falls,’ said Mrs Oswald; ‘I cannot convince them that there is no chance of Edward's coming to-day.’

‘Look! look! aunt Dunallan,’ exclaimed little Mary, ‘is not that a carriage moving far away among the trees?’

‘A carriage!’ repeated Catharine, ‘surely not;’ her heart began to beat quick. ‘Can it be possible Mr Dunallan may come sooner than ——?’



‘It is, it is, a carriage!’ exclaimed the child. ‘I see it quite plain.’

Catharine stooped to look in the same direction. ‘It is indeed,’ said she, turning to Mrs Oswald, and becoming quite pale.

Mrs Oswald now perceived it also. ‘Thank God!’ exclaimed she, clasping her hands joyfully, ‘it must be Edward.’

The carriage now approached rapidly, and the people who had been employed in clearing away the snow, showed by their joyful gestures that it contained their master.

‘Let us be ready to receive him in the hall!’ exclaimed Mrs Oswald; ‘come, my Catharine.’ Catharine hesitated. The children flew out of the room. ‘Will you not at least meet him kindly, Catharine?’

‘Would he wish it, Madam?’ asked Catharine, pale and trembling, and tears starting into her eyes.

‘Surely, my Catharine; at any rate it is right; it is proper you should.’

‘Then I will, Madam.’

‘Lean on me, then, my love, for you tremble sadly,’ said Mrs Oswald, taking Catharine’s arm in hers, and hastening her out of the room.

The hall door was opened by the servants, who now respectfully retired to a distance, and left Mrs Oswald, Catharine, and the children, to receive Dunallan, whose carriage rapidly approached. The wind whistled through the large hall, and moved the pictures from the walls; the children stood in the cold blast, their eyes eagerly bent on the carriage, but constantly dimmed by the tears produced by the piercing breeze. Catharine’s dress and her hair were disturbed, but she felt it not.

‘What a reception for you, my dear Edward!’ said Mrs Oswald, as she observed the wind drift the snow into a window of his carriage, which he had let down as he approached; but you will find warmth and comfort soon,’ added she, pressing Catharine’s hand in hers.

‘Will he leave all the cold behind him?’ said Catharine.

‘For shame, my Catharine. If you value your own happiness—if you value his happiness, receive him kindly,’ whispered Mrs Oswald.



The carriage stopt, and Catharine's heart seemed to stop beating. The door was instantly opened, and she saw that it was Dunallan. She saw him alight, but not with the quickness of joy; he approached.

'My dear aunt! Catharine!' he pressed her to his breast, and put his cold cheek to hers for an instant; then hurried from her, and clasped his aunt, then the children, fondly to his heart.

'How dreadfully cold you are, dear Dunallan,' said Mrs Oswald; 'do come into the warm room.'

Dunallan stopt to notice, with his usual friendly kindness, the servants who had now crowded into the hall. Catharine stopt unconsciously also. When Dunallan turned to go into the warm apartment, he held out his hand for her; she gave it him, but not readily.

'You fear I shall chill you, Catharine,' said he, in a low tone of voice, as they entered the room.

'Oh no,' replied she, eagerly; and taking his hand in both of hers, 'you are indeed terribly cold,' said she, gently.

Dunallan looked at her for a moment, then withdrew his hand almost rudely, and turning hastily from her, stooped down to caress the children, who clung about him. Catharine, abashed, and deeply hurt, retired to a sofa, where she was shaded from the light of the fire, which Mrs Oswald, anxious again to see the countenance of her beloved nephew, now made blaze with most unmerciful brightness. But Dunallan seemed unwilling to gratify this wish of his aunt's; he continued for some time to fondle the children, so as to completely conceal his face.

'We did not hope to see you so soon, my dear Edward,' said Mrs Oswald.

'I have been anxious to get home,' replied he; 'I have reasons for being so, and did not remain in London a moment after I had settled the business regarding my mission abroad, and there was little to settle.'

'Did you find the roads open everywhere?'

'Everywhere. I feared I might be stopped near home; but that, I might have foreseen, you, my dear aunt, would prevent.'



‘Catharine, at least did,’ replied Mrs Oswald; ‘for I really had not thought of it till she reminded me.’

‘Catharine!’ repeated Dunallan, looking towards where she sat.

Catharine was silent,—indeed, her heart was too full to allow her to speak. She was now struck, however, with the change in Dunallan’s looks. He was thin and pale; and there was a languor in his eyes which she immediately supposed must have been occasioned by illness; indeed, his whole appearance was so different from what her imagination had of late pictured him, that she forgot all her causes of displeasure.

‘Edward!’ exclaimed Mrs Oswald, ‘you have been ill! I am sure you have. Why did you conceal it from us?’

‘I fear you have, Mr Dunallan,’ said Catharine, in a voice of the deepest interest.

Some very painful recollections seemed to return to Dunallan’s memory, and changed the expression of his countenance to a graveness almost stern. ‘I have not been one day seriously ill, in health at least, since I left Arnmore,’ replied he; and then putting the children gently from him, he rose and stood so as to turn his face from the light.

Catharine now felt only for him. ‘I have guessed too truly,’ thought she; ‘he has had some cause of uneasiness quite as serious as any I have feared.’ Aspasia—another attachment—flashed upon her thoughts, but she turned from them.

A painful silence ensued. Catharine felt anxious to relieve Dunallan, and, scarcely knowing what she said, made some inquiry regarding a Russian winter. He entered eagerly into the subject, which soon led to others; and then he succeeded, as in former times, so completely in interesting his hearers, as to draw their thoughts from any other subject but that on which he conversed. He described some characters with whom he had associated while abroad, and entered freely and openly into the nature of the affair which had induced him to leave his country; expressing, with much feeling, his gratitude to Heaven for the rapid and unexpected success which had attended his efforts, and for the ease with which every difficulty had been overcome. He had at first stood near Catharine while he spoke, he then



seated himself by her. The light was full upon him while she still continued in the shade, so that she could more easily observe the expressions of his countenance; but though animated, he continued to look grave and melancholy. The children again hung upon him, and he returned their little caresses with the utmost tenderness. Mrs Oswald, too, had brought her chair close to where he sat, and regarded him with looks of the greatest anxiety and concern.

‘Dear affectionate little creatures!’ said Dunallan, pressing the children fondly to his breast, ‘absence seems to make you feel only more kindly.’

‘Aunt Dunallan says that is always the case for those we really love,’ said the eldest child.

‘Does aunt Dunallan say so?’ replied Dunallan, stooping to caress the child so as to conceal his face, which had in a moment been again overcast.

‘Yes, uncle, aunt Dunallan has often said so when you were away.’

Dunallan continued to lean over the child in silence, while she proceeded, ‘You know, uncle Dunallan, the morning you went away you told Mary and me, that we must not allow aunt Dunallan to forget you, so we talked to her every day about you.’

‘And you teased aunt Dunallan, I suppose, till she told you it was unnecessary to remind her so often of me, because she always felt most affectionately for those who were absent.’

‘Oh, no, no, uncle! aunt Dunallan never tired of our speaking of you.’

‘Oh, never!’ interrupted little Mary; ‘for often when she was too busy reading, or thinking, to mind me when I spoke to her, I have said something about you, and then she put away the book, and took me up on her lap, and kissed me, and listened to me while I spoke of you, and said I was a good child to remember so well about you, for I ought to love you more than any body else in the world.’

Dunallan pressed the child fondly to his heart, and then looking at Catharine, with the only smile of real pleasure which had yet brightened his countenance, ‘You have succeeded most



astonishingly, Catharine,' said he, 'in obliging yourself to meet all my wishes, however unreasonable—this last was too severe.'

The expression of Dunallan's countenance, and the softened tone of his voice, were so completely at variance with his words, that Catharine could not reply, and felt quite relieved when Helen, at that moment, entered the room. She rose to meet her friend; who seemed about to retreat, on observing the party so seated as to confirm her fears that she must be felt an intruder.

'Come in, my dear girl,' said Mrs Oswald. 'This young lady, Edward, has preferred being with Catharine during this dreary season to all the gaieties of a town life.'

The bashful Helen was unable, at any time, to speak to a stranger without embarrassment, much less so to Dunallan, of whom she had formed the most exalted idea. She curtsied to him; then glancing round, as if for some retreat, took possession of Catharine's shaded corner in the sofa. Catharine also looked round for a retreat, for Dunallan's eyes were fixed upon her as she now stood in the light. She turned away, for she had not yet met his looks, and unconsciously avoided them. At this moment, however, dinner was announced. Dunallan did not, as formerly, offer his arm to Catharine, but stood coldly back till the ladies passed, and then followed them into the dining-room. All was here in a blaze of light; and Catharine, seated opposite to Dunallan, could no longer avoid that interchange of looks which betrays far more than language can conceal. Conscious that his always returned to her the moment after he had, with his usual gentle and winning politeness, attended to his other guests, she felt confused and embarrassed. Dunallan, however, became less grave. He attempted to draw the blushing Helen into conversation, and succeeded wonderfully in finding subjects of sufficient interest to lead her to forget that he was a stranger, and to converse easily with him. His countenance at times expressed the vivacity which usually brightened it; but a moment of thought destroyed those expressions, and restored languor and melancholy to his looks and manner. Catharine felt certain that her fears and conjectures were too well founded; but, as the evening advanced, she hoped that in one supposition she had



been mistaken. Dunallan, she felt, was pleased with every mark of regard for him on her part. His smile of pleasure at what little Mary had told him, was followed by looks of equal delight when any thing occurred to prove how much he had been the object of her thoughts during his absence. Yet his looks, when turned on her, did not express the same feelings as formerly. She even thought at moments, that he was less respectful to her; but he far more frequently regarded her with interest, and at least mildness.

After tea Helen left the room, saying she had letters to write. Catharine guessed that her real motive was, to leave Dunallan at liberty to converse with his family, unrestrained by the presence of a stranger, and she sighed to think how little such attentions would be valued.

‘Talking of letters, my dear Edward,’ said Mrs Oswald, ‘I must say you were not quite so good a correspondent during your last absence as formerly.’

Catharine started at this sudden introduction of a subject she hoped Mrs Oswald had intended to avoid, and becoming very pale, turned her eyes towards her with the most alarmed and beseeching expression; but Mrs Oswald seemed determined not to see her; she did not look at Dunallan either, but kept her eyes fixed on her work. ‘Your letters were “few and far between,”’ continued she.

Catharine’s heart beat almost to suffocation. Dunallan did not immediately reply; and, unconscious of what she did, she half rose, looked towards the door, as if to escape, and then sat down again, becoming still paler.

‘Do not be alarmed, Catharine,’ said Dunallan, with a low and forced calmness of voice, ‘you have no cause—be assured, you never shall have cause. Your peace of mind, whatever concerns you, is still as much my care as ever.’ He approached her as he spoke; she looked up, and saw him greatly agitated.

‘Mr Dunallan,’ said Catharine, with much emotion, ‘do not be so constantly anxious about my peace of mind—believe me, I am satisfied with the share of it which heaven has allotted to me.’

Dunallan looked at her for a moment, as if he did not under-



stand her, then said, 'Believe my assurances, Catharine, and rely on them whatever happens.' Then turning to Mrs Oswald, 'My dear aunt, I must request you for once to forgive my being reserved with you. I confess I have been a very bad correspondent since I last left you ; but the cause, I entreat, you will never ask me to explain. I know you will not when I tell you that even the least reference to the subject is painful to me. To you, Catharine,' added he, turning to her, 'I am always ready to be perfectly open on this, and every other subject, should you ever wish it.' Dunallan then left the room.

'Oh, Madam !' exclaimed Catharine, 'what have you done ! Mr Dunallan, I see, thinks it is I who wish for an explanation.'

'Forgive me, my Catharine, I thought I was doing right. Things are more serious than I supposed. My dear Edward ! I fear something very serious has happened.' Mrs Oswald seemed extremely uneasy.

'Whatever has happened, my dear Madam,' said Catharine, warmly, 'let us not add to Mr Dunallan's too evident unhappiness, by suffering him to suppose that we regard him as improperly reserved to us. I cannot again speak on this painful subject to him, but he must know instantly that I shall never, never ask any explanation.' Catharine then, as quickly as her trembling hands would permit, wrote these few lines :—

'I entreat you, Mr Dunallan, to forget what has just passed. Believe me, nothing would have induced me—nothing ever shall induce me—to intrude even in thought into your feelings, or into the motives of any part of your conduct, which, to me, has ever been such as to inspire a gratitude which, were I not satisfied to owe it to you, would be painfully oppressive.

'C. DUNALLAN.'

Catharine gave her note to Mrs Oswald. 'May I ask you to take this to him, my dear Madam ; and perhaps also to exculpate me from the suspicion, that I think myself entitled to know any thing he wishes to conceal ? You know, my dear Mrs Oswald, I never did.'

Mrs Oswald took the note, 'I shall do all you wish, my love.'



Catharine waited in anxiety for Mrs Oswald's return—at last she approached. Catharine met her.

‘I do not comprehend my nephew at present,’ said she; ‘I never before found the least difficulty in understanding all he did or said.’

‘How, my dear Madam?’

‘When I went to him he met me with his usual gentleness. He was walking slowly across the library with his arms folded on his breast, and so deep in thought, he did not observe my entrance. When he did, he smiled with his own sweetness of expression, and entreated me to forgive him if he had said any thing too warmly. “You would,” added he, “if you knew how painful any allusion to my correspondence with home was to me.” I said I had come with a note from you, and ———. He did not wait to hear what more I had to say, but eagerly took your note. He seemed disappointed, however, and was much displeased with its contents. Again and again he read it, then crushed it indignantly in his hand, and turned as if to throw it into the fire, but did not. I then said, that it was I only who had wished for an explanation, and that you wished him to know this. He again appeared displeased, but said, “Tell Catharine I think I understand her. All shall remain as she wishes; nor will I at present attempt to *intrude into her feelings*.” These last words he repeated rather ironically.’

‘What can he mean?’ exclaimed Catharine; ‘but I have said that I will not attempt, even in thought, to account for his present conduct. I think I have discovered what my own duty is. To fulfil that must now be my only aim.’

Mrs Oswald soon became silent and thoughtful. Catharine, too, began to think deeply, and in forming plans for the future, for a time completely forgot the present. She soon determined in her own mind, that she could best fulfil her duty to Dunallan, by carefully avoiding any reference to the past; by herself attempting to be as cheerful as possible, and thus remove from him every cause of uneasiness on her account; and by using every means in her power to draw his thoughts away from those unhappy recollections which seemed to oppress him. ‘These must be my duties,’ thought she, ‘whatever has caused his



present dejection. I must not inquire into that, neither must I yield to pride, which might deter me from attempting to overcome whatever has produced the change in his feelings towards me, or from seeking his regard. It must be proper for the wife of Dunallan to possess his affections. I shall make the attempt, because both will be happy if I succeed: if not, I shall at least have done my duty. I may be mortified and humbled, but I have now learnt that it is good for me to be so. Pride and false delicacy would *naturally* have been my guides. And the struggle must be, duty against pride, and against my nature.'

Thus far had Catharine proceeded in her plans for the future, when a servant entered to say, that Mr Dunallan waited for the ladies in the library. With a beating heart Catharine proceeded thither. Dunallan, with his habitual politeness, recognised their entrance, but immediately again fixed his eyes on the book in his hand. He stood till the ladies were seated, and Catharine, recollecting her newly formed resolutions, uninvited, took her former place beside him.

When the service was over, Dunallan turned to Catharine, 'You persevered in reading to the servants, I find,' said he, in a grave, calm tone of voice.

'Yes,' replied Catharine, 'I kept up the form. It was a pleasure to me even to do that.'

'You did all, Catharine, that any one could do. Every religious duty is form, unless it is blessed from above. I hope and trust your reading the Scriptures was so; and I am certain,' added he in a lower tone of voice, 'you have my warmest gratitude for so perseveringly fulfilling my request.'

'It is I who ought to be grateful,' replied Catharine, 'for having been led to fulfil a duty so useful to myself.'

'Have you really found it so, Catharine?' asked Dunallan, on observing Mrs Oswald and Helen engaged in conversation at some distance, and looking earnestly at Catharine as he spoke.

She blushed. 'I hope I have. If you think I deceive myself, I know you will tell me.'

'It is too, too easy to deceive ourselves,' replied Dunallan, emphatically; 'but the study of the Bible, with the sincere de-



sire of understanding it, we are sure, is the best means of enlightening any mind and conscience.'

'I do hope so,' observed Catharine, with an expression of alarm and timidity on her countenance, from the earnestness of Dunallan's manner.

'Be assured they are,' said he more gently; and turning from her, he joined Mrs Oswald and Helen.

Mrs Oswald soon proposed separating. Her nephew, she said, must require repose. Dunallan had, in conversation, just betrayed his having travelled for the two preceding nights. 'For what reason?' thought Catharine; but she checked her curiosity, and instantly seconded Mrs Oswald's proposal to retire.

---

## CHAPTER XV.

CATHARINE rose very early next morning, long before the late and clouded sun, that she might have her now indispensable hour of solitude and reflection, and that she might also, before the family again met, visit a poor old woman, who, in the view of approaching death, seemed to find great consolation in her kindness. The sun was still so low in the sky as to be concealed behind the woods of Arnmore, when Catharine returned from her expedition. She found the family were just assembling in the library, and hurrying off her walking dress, she hastened to join them. She was, however, the last.'

'I hear you were out, my love,' whispered Mrs Oswald, as Catharine passed her; 'was that prudent at such a season?'

Catharine's already brightened complexion became more glowing; 'I shall account to you afterwards, my dear Madam, for my early walk. I hoped to have returned sooner,—but Mr Dunallan, do not let me now detain you.'

Dunallan immediately proceeded.

When the servants were again withdrawn, Mrs Oswald renewed her inquiries. 'Where in the world were you, Catharine?'



‘I shall tell you at another time, my dear Madam,’ replied she, observing that Dunallan’s eyes were fixed upon her.

Dunallan turned away, and immediately left the room.

‘Oh! I have offended him!’ exclaimed Catharine. ‘How wrong! I ought to have no concealments with him.’

‘Indeed, my love, he is quite unaccountable,’ said Mrs Oswald. ‘Before you came he seemed quite miserable about you, and reproached me almost with severity for suffering you to expose your precious health in such a manner; yet when you appeared he assumed a coldness of looks which I am sure was a mere disguise. There is some strange mystery in all this. But tell me, Catharine, where have you been?’

Catharine satisfied Mrs Oswald’s curiosity in a few words, and described the scene she had just witnessed; they then proceeded to the breakfast-room. Catharine intended immediately, on again meeting him, to mention to Dunallan the object of her early walk, but he instantly began to talk on another subject. He looked more himself this morning, though still looking ill, and at times very grave, yet he became more cheerful every moment. Catharine’s ease and playfulness returned with his returning smiles, and again, as formerly, she began to look, unconsciously, for the expression produced on his countenance, by what she had just said, before she felt satisfied that she was right.

Mrs Oswald listened with delight to a conversation which seemed to promise returning confidence and happiness. It was soon interrupted, however, by a servant announcing a visitor: ‘Dr Angus, the worthy clergyman of the parish.’ Dunallan for a moment seemed disappointed, but the happy looks of the good man immediately recalled his kinder feelings, and he hastened to meet him with the utmost cordiality.

‘My dear Sir,’ said the Doctor, ‘excuse this early visit. I could not resist coming to welcome you home.’

‘Thank you, Doctor,’ said Dunallan. ‘I intended to have visited you this morning.’

‘Your horses are now at the door, dear Sir,’ said the Doctor, ‘which induced me to intrude before you went out.’

‘Do you mean to ride this very cold day, Mr Dunallan?’



asked Catharine anxiously; 'surely a little rest after your late fatigues would be better.'

Dunallan smiled; 'I do not think that *you*, Catharine, are much entitled to prescribe care, and avoiding of cold, and so on —.'

'Indeed,' said the Doctor, 'if Mrs Dunallan did not prove so incontrovertibly by her looks that she does not suffer from her disregard of weather, and every difficulty, when bent on doing good, I should say she exposed herself rather too much. You, Sir,' continued the Doctor, anxiously, 'do not appear to have of late enjoyed the blessing of health so perfectly.'

'You are mistaken, Doctor; I have enjoyed perfect health,' replied Dunallan, quickly; and turning away, but instantly recovering himself, 'I am, indeed, delighted and thankful to find Catharine look so well.'

The Doctor perceived he had touched on some unpleasant subject, and turning to Catharine, said, 'I find, Madam, that you saw poor old Elspeth this morning.'

'I did,' replied Catharine, blushing.

'She has at last got away,' said the Doctor.

'Gone?' asked Catharine.

'Yes, Madam. She lived only about an hour after you left her.'

Catharine's eyes filled with tears; 'I did not think it would have been quite so soon; were you with her at the last, Doctor?'

'I was, Madam. Her last words were, "Tell my dear lady, that all is light now. I need no priest but the One Everlasting High Priest—my lady told me truth—she read me truth—my poor soul is safe—He will cast out none who come to Him—peace! peace!" she leant back with an expression of such joy, I cannot describe it, and expired.'

Catharine was much moved.

'Of whom do you speak?' asked Dunallan, with great interest.

'Of the old widow, to whom you, Sir, gave the cottage on the edge of the lake.'

'Oh, I remember her. She was a Catholic.'

'Yes, and never would suffer me to speak to her on the subject of religion,' replied the Doctor, 'till about a month ago.'



I do not know by what means Mrs Dunallan overcame her ignorance and superstitious prejudices.'

'I!' exclaimed Catharine. 'I did nothing in the world but attempt to persuade her to read the Bible. At first she would not without the permission of her priest; but he was at such a distance she could not go to him. I then began by repeating parts of the Bible to her, and she was at last prevailed on to listen while I read it. She then became so eager to hear it, that she used to entreat her neighbours to read to her; and she learnt its contents with wonderful quickness. Of late she has thought death very near; and her former ideas regarding the necessity of having a priest to perform the ceremonies of her church, and prepare her for death, have made her at times very uneasy. I am so ignorant myself, that I know not well how to argue from the Bible against these superstitious notions; but I searched for such passages as I thought suited to convince her, that man, at that moment, could make no alteration on the real state of her soul; that her priest's prayers would be of no avail, unless she herself had a heart to pray; and if she had, she might be assured that God had bestowed it upon her, and would listen to her requests. I found many parts of Scripture to confirm this, and knew nothing better to say.'

'Nothing better was required, you see,' said Dunallan, with much emotion.

'Ah! Catharine, you have been so highly favoured as to have been made the means of saving an immortal soul,' said Mrs Oswald.

'Mrs Dunallan has, indeed, been blessed with great success in all her endeavours to do good, Sir,' said the Doctor. 'You will be surprised, Sir, to see what good effects all your plans have had under your lady's care.'

'And still more under yours, my good Doctor,' said Catharine.

'Ah! my dear lady,' replied the Doctor, 'I have been here twenty years; that answers for my part; for, though I had seen some reform in the morals of my flock, I must now say that the change has been greater since Mr Dunallan and you, Madam, came here, than during all the many years before.'



‘We must forget the past, Doctor,’ said Dunallan: ‘you know there were many causes formerly for your want of success. But, pray, tell me more about the people.’

‘Well, Sir, your library is doing immense good. Ever since your lady has attended in person when the books were given out, and in her irresistible way has recommended particular ones to those who applied, it is astonishing how the people have improved.’

‘But, Catharine, how in the world can you know what books are most proper for each applicant?’ asked Dunallan, his countenance expressing the greatest pleasure while he looked for her answer.

‘Indeed, I do not know,’ replied she, ‘but Dr Angus tells me the characters of the people and of the books, and I just recommend what I think will be most suitable; and they like this attention on my part, and read carefully what I recommend, because, I suppose, they think their doing so will please you.’

Dunallan smiled.

‘And then,’ resumed the Doctor, ‘your lady’s and Mrs Oswald’s constant attendance at church, morning and evening, and their exemplary deportment during the service, have worked a wonderful change. Now every body comes to church, and every one tries to listen; and indeed, Sir, the good effects of this follow me to my study, for it is discouraging to preach without being attended to. Now I feel it a delight to prepare instructions for my attentive people. So much good can one family in an exalted situation do, who are guided by the pure precepts of religion. Now it is really the desire of the people to receive information on that subject, which is of more importance than all others; and many, particularly among the young, begin to evince the most earnest concern respecting their immortal interests.’

Dunallan’s eyes glistened while the Doctor continued to enumerate the many improvements which had taken place during his absence; and when, after nearly two hours, the good man took his leave, he still continued to converse on the subject with Mrs Oswald and Catharine. Helen soon left the room. Mrs Oswald then found some excuse for going, but her absence



had not the effect she desired; Dunallan became silent and embarrassed, and Catharine felt his embarrassment infectious. Dunallan seemed to perceive this, and saying quickly, 'I do not attempt to thank you, Catharine, for all your care of my people, but believe me it is because I cannot,'—he was leaving the room, when Catharine said,

'I entreat you, do not pain me by thinking, that what has been my greatest pleasure can have been any trouble to me. May I ask you never again to mention your *gratitude* on this subject?'

Dunallan stopped. 'Oh! Catharine!' exclaimed he, earnestly, 'I wish I could understand you. Is it possible you can, even on such subjects as these, wish to —; but pardon me, I had almost forgotten my promise.' He then hastily quitted the room, leaving Catharine surprised and alarmed by his manner and inexplicable words; but all attempts to unravel his meaning, she found were vain.

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

A WEEK passed away, and nothing occurred to lead to any explanation of Dunallan's conduct; he seemed, however, to become less unhappy every day; and his warmly expressed approbation of all Catharine had done in his absence,—his gratitude,—his gentle attentions, and ever-pleasing conversation, gave a new interest to her existence. His frequent appearance of melancholy, still, however, gave her continual uneasiness, while his evident suspicion, at times of her sincerity, led her to fear she had in some way injured herself in his opinion; and kind, and attentive, and gentle, as he ever was, there was yet a something in his manner, which deterred her from asking any explanation; or, indeed, from ever being quite at ease with him. Dunallan, too, did not now seek her society, but, on the contrary, seemed carefully to avoid being left alone with her.

One evening, on receiving his letters, Catharine observed, that after reading one, Dunallan became extremely pale; he



looked anxiously at her, but she instantly turned away her eyes, and felt grieved that he should know she had seen his emotion. During that evening, he was even more than usually gentle and attentive in his manner to her. The idea that Dunallan had, during his absence, met with some amiable being to whom he had involuntarily given his affections, had long and frequently presented itself to Catharine's mind: but the idea was so painful, she had the more easily succeeded in fulfilling what she considered a duty, by banishing, as much as she possibly could, every thought that led to the subject. Dunallan's letter of this night, however, she could not help believing was connected with this painful idea; and this thought rendered his attentions less pleasing.

Next morning his manner was even more soothingly gentle than the evening before; but the same ideas still possessed her mind. She admired Dunallan's attempt, as she thought, to be kind to his poor unloved wife, but each new and gentle attention increased her sadness; and, as soon as breakfast was over, she rose to leave the room. She went to a window as she passed. The snow had again fallen as deep as ever, and she felt uncertain whether she should on that day visit her school, which she had done less frequently since Dunallan's return. She was surprised on observing the road in the avenue opened for a carriage.

'Who is going out in a carriage?' asked she; but it instantly struck her that Dunallan was again about to leave Arnmore. She felt a sickness come over her heart, but turned away, for Dunallan had followed her to the window.

'I received a letter last night, Catharine, which ——' he stopped ——

'Which must take you from home, Mr Dunallan,' said Catharine, in a cold and hurried tone of voice.

'Not me, Catharine,' said Dunallan.

'Who, then?' asked Catharine, turning round as she spoke.

He looked much distressed, 'My letter was from Dunallan Castle.'

'And my father is ill:—Oh! Mr Dunallan, how could you conceal this from me! My father! my dear father!'

'Be composed, dearest Catharine; I have only attempted to



save you from unnecessary pain. You could not have travelled till the road was opened.'

'Forgive me, Mr Dunallan: you are always kind; but now you will allow me to go to him.' She burst into tears.

'All is ready for your departure, dearest Catharine.'

'But is my father very ill?'

Dunallan gave her a letter from Elizabeth.

'I must be alone when I read this,' said she, turning to go.

She trembled excessively. Dunallan supported her to the door of her apartment. She there found Martin making preparations for her journey, and Mrs Oswald herself assisting her.

'Ah! my dear, kind Mrs Oswald, that is too, too much!'

Mrs Oswald pressed her to her heart. 'Do not think of me, my love; think only at present of the mercy and kindness of your Heavenly Father, to those who put their trust in Him; and place all your confidence in his promised care and presence.'

Catharine could not speak, but hastening into her dressing-room, threw herself upon her knees, and in that posture opened Elizabeth's letter.

'I have delayed as long as I think I ought, to give you the pain, my own Catharine, which I now fear I must. Your dear father was taken ill about a fortnight ago. He did not wish any one to be informed of it, or to come to him at this severe season; but I learned it from his physician, who had been sent for from Edinburgh, and who considered it proper to acquaint me with his illness. My mother is too delicate to think of travelling at this season of the year, much as she wished it. I therefore came here immediately. I found my dear uncle looking very ill, though not suffering much. He has become gradually worse since my arrival; and, though he has positively forbidden my acquainting you with his illness, I dare no longer conceal it from you. He is constantly talking of his beloved child, but says he would not for the world you knew that he was ill, for he knows you would attempt to come to him, and that the roads near Arnmore must at present be entirely shut up. He often expresses a wish to see Mr Dunallan, who, he supposes, is now at Arnmore, but seems to think Mr Dunallan regards him with so much dislike, that he would not willingly come to him.'



Catharine hurried over the remaining part of Elizabeth's letter ; only one idea was now present to her mind,—her father's life was in danger ! She prayed earnestly for his recovery ; she prayed for strength and composure of mind for herself, that she might be enabled to attend him, whatever should be the event, without disturbing him by her emotions. She ardently desired that Dunallan would agree to her father's wish, and go to him ; but she shrunk from the idea of making the request, as she well knew with what coldness, at least, he regarded Lord Dunallan. Her father's danger, however, and the recollection of his utter neglect of all that was necessary to prepare his soul for its eternal state, almost overpowered her, and soon overcoming every other feeling, she determined, at least, to attempt to induce Dunallan to accompany her to her father's sick-room.

'All is ready, my love,' said Mrs Oswald, as Catharine quickly passed her. Catharine did not stay to reply, but proceeded towards the breakfast room. Dunallan, however, was in the hall, and seemed prepared to go out. He was himself giving directions to the servants, who were putting things into the carriage, which was to carry Catharine away. 'Ah,' thought she, 'he is going out to ride as usual, and only waits till I am gone.' Her heart sunk, but again recollecting her father, she, almost in despair, approached him.

'Will you allow me to speak with you in private, Mr Dunallan, for one moment ?'

Dunallan started on hearing her voice, and immediately accompanied her to the nearest apartment.

'You will think I encroach on your goodness, Mr Dunallan, but at this moment I cannot, I ought not, to think of any one but my father ; you know his danger ; you know, Mr Dunallan, how little he regarded, how little he attempted to prepare,'—Catharine became breathless, and stopt.

'My dearest Catharine, what do you wish ? Do not recal such remembrances.'

'Oh ! I cannot banish them ; but it is not yet too late. My father wishes to see you, Mr Dunallan—could you overcome your former feelings for him—could you forgive him all the misery he has cost you, and agree to his wish ; how irresistibly



would such goodness convince him of the power and perfection of your principles !’

‘Most assuredly, Catharine, I will go to him if he wishes it ; I have nothing to forgive ; I only waited your permission to accompany you, but dreaded asking it, lest at such a moment my presence should only have annoyed you. May I now hope you will suffer me to accompany you ?’

Catharine’s eyes filled with tears. ‘How generously you always ——,’ she could say no more ; tears choked her utterance, and she hurried away.

In a few minutes Catharine and Dunallan were on their road to Dunallan Castle. Catharine felt the support Dunallan’s presence gave her. She felt her hopes reviving, because he spoke as if he believed Lord Dunallan might yet recover. All his coldness of manner too was now gone. He seemed painfully uneasy lest she should suffer from the severity of the weather. He had completely wrapped her in a large fur pelisse, and soon threw another to the bottom of the carriage, to save her still more perfectly from the chill air ; yet still seemed unsatisfied.

‘I am quite warm and comfortable, Mr Dunallan,’ said Catharine, smiling sweetly. ‘Permit me to attend to your health now ; this pelisse is far too beautiful to be trod upon.’ She would have presented it to him, but he put it gently away.

‘I am accustomed to cold, Catharine,’ said he, smiling sadly ; ‘I rather long for its bracing power. I wish it could penetrate to my soul, and renovate its strength also.’

Catharine looked surprised, Dunallan spoke with an expression so unlike his usual self-command. He turned away, and for some moments continued silent.

The country through which they passed was one immense and continued waste of untrodden snow. The day was dark and gloomy ; not a breath of wind stirred the trees, as they stood bearing, to their smallest branches, their cold soft, load of snow.

Dunallan, however, soon began to converse with his usual power of exciting interest ; and heavy, and apprehensive for the future, as Catharine’s heart was, she felt surprised when the short day closed in. The road had been cleared wherever it was necessary, and fresh horses were ready at every stage. Dunallan



had not proposed her stopping for a moment on the road, so that, at an early hour in the evening, Catharine perceived that they were approaching Dunallan Castle. Her apprehensions again returned with overpowering force. She entreated Dunallan to stop the carriage at one of the cottages on the road. 'They will all know how he is,' said she.

Dunallan immediately stopped the carriage, but told Catharine he had sent forward a servant whom they would soon meet. At this moment the man rode up to the carriage.

'My Lord is better to-day, Sir,' said he, in answer to Dunallan's inquiries.

'Thank God!' exclaimed Catharine, bursting into tears.

'Thank God!' repeated Dunallan, energetically.

Catharine was now all impatience to embrace her father. 'Should this illness be the means of leading my father to attend to religion,' said she, thoughtfully, 'I shall not regret it. Perhaps it is thus that God has been pleased to answer my prayers for him. But what am I, that God should listen to my poor unworthy prayers? Tell me, Mr Dunallan, do you think it presumption or enthusiasm to suppose that God does any thing in consequence of our prayers?'

'No, Catharine, I think it presumptuous in the last degree, to dare to disbelieve what God himself has declared to be the case; and He has said, that He is "the hearer of prayer," and that "the prayer of the righteous availeth much."'

'Ah, yes! but not such prayers as mine; from a heart so apt to wander from Him—so evil—so occupied with trifles—so altogether unworthy; from a mind so ignorant and dark, that I can only at intervals form such ideas of Him as to excite that love He demands, and feel in general only that dread of offending Him which makes me tremble. Prayers from a mind in such a state cannot be acceptable.'

'Pardon me, dear Catharine, I think on the contrary, that, in your account of yourself, I see the very character which our heavenly Father has declared He will regard, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word."'

Catharine melted into tears, 'Ah, thank you, thank you, a



thousand times, for these precious words ! I shall not soon forget them. How sweetly comforting they are !’

‘If you indeed wish not to forget them, Catharine,’ replied Dunallan with extreme gentleness, ‘and to feel that comfort they are graciously intended to bestow, thank Him whose words they are, and who alone can enlighten the mind.’

Catharine remained silent ; she was touched by Dunallan’s words, and by his gentle, yet earnest manner.

‘Do not be displeased with me, Catharine,’ resumed he ; ‘believe me, that, in thus venturing to risk offending you, on all occasions where your first and best interests are concerned, I prefer your real happiness to my own present comfort at least.’

‘Displease me !’ repeated Catharine, ‘I wish you saw my heart, Mr Dunallan.’

‘Do you, Catharine ?’ asked Dunallan in an incredulous tone of voice.

‘At this moment, Mr Dunallan, I do.’

Dunallan was silent ; and in a few minutes they entered the grounds of Dunallan Castle. The moon was obscured by clouds, but still its light, joined to the brightness of the snow, enabled Catharine to trace the well known scenery around her, while her feelings became flurried and confused by the various ideas which now crowded into her mind. The dreariness of the wide expanse of snow—the melancholy occasion of her return to her early home—Dunallan’s presence, which ever excited a deep, and now a painful interest, from his unaccountable conduct, contrasted with his irresistibly gentle and pleasing manners and conversation—her approaching meeting with her father—the pleasing hope of again seeing Elizabeth—all struggled for the first place in her thoughts, and by turns occupied it. At last the carriage stopt. Dunallan threw open the door on his side, and in a moment stood ready to assist Catharine’s trembling attempts to hasten to Elizabeth, who stood within the great door of the hall to receive her. Dunallan almost carried her into the house.

‘My own Elizabeth !’ ‘My beloved Catharine !’ exclaimed the friends, ardently embracing.

‘My kindest, dearest Elizabeth !’ said Catharine, when



they had reached the apartment to which Elizabeth led the way, 'you have been my father's successful nurse, and he is better.'

'Yes, dearest Catharine, this day he has been less uneasy, I think.'

'Less uneasy!' repeated Catharine, 'is that all!' She attempted in vain to be calm, and burst into tears. Elizabeth attempted to soothe her, but in vain.

'Does he know I am coming, Elizabeth? May I see him now?'

'He knows you are coming, my dearest Catharine, and you will relieve him from his anxiety about you by seeing him immediately; but, my Catharine, you must, for his sake, be composed; you will find him altered in appearance.'

Catharine started and shuddered.

'A very slight and short illness greatly alters the appearance at times, dearest Catharine,' said Dunallan; 'you must be prepared to expect this, but do not be alarmed;' then speaking in a lower tone of voice, 'remember in whose merciful and compassionate hands his and all our lives are; and trust all your anxieties and fears to Him.'

Catharine instantly became composed. She turned to Elizabeth, 'I *am* composed, Elizabeth; take me to my father.' She then left the room, internally imploring that support to which Dunallan had turned her thoughts.

It was more than an hour before Catharine again joined Dunallan; and, though her eyes showed traces of the tender nature of her meeting with her father, her countenance had resumed, in some degree, its usual happy and lively expression.

'My father is not so ill as I feared,' exclaimed she, on entering the room. 'I am sure he is not.'

Dunallan's countenance instantly reflected the pleasure that glowed in hers. 'He has trusted to me to express his gratitude to you, Mr Dunallan,' continued Catharine, 'for thus kindly indulging his wishes. He is anxious to see you, but is too much exhausted now. In the morning he hopes for that pleasure. And now, how shall I express both his gratitude and my own?' added she.



‘By never mentioning the word to me, Catharine,’ replied Dunallan; ‘for whenever you do, I feel as if you meant to remind me how painful it is to be in the slightest degree obliged by one who has cost you so much unhappiness.’

‘Unhappiness!’ repeated Catharine; but Elizabeth’s entrance prevented her expressing the feelings Dunallan’s words and manner had inspired; and, on reflection, she was glad she had been interrupted; for, kind and anxious as his manner during this day had been, he had said nothing to do away her fears that some cause existed which led him to wish rather to avoid than to seek to excite her affection for him. She soon returned to her father’s apartment, and remained with him as long as his anxiety for her would suffer her to stay. She then lingered near the door of his room, till she heard all silent and quiet within; and after praying for every blessing to rest upon him, she retired for the night.

Catharine ordered Martin to call her at an early hour next morning; but for once Martin was disobedient; and fatigue so far overcame her anxiety, that the late sun was completely risen when she awoke. She started from her pillow, and dressing as hastily as she could, went immediately to the door of her father’s apartment. His servant was in the ante-room. She inquired if her father was awake, and was informed that Mr Dunallan had been with him for the last hour. Catharine rejoiced at this interview, and, determining not to interrupt it, was turning to go in quest of Elizabeth, when the door of her father’s apartment was softly opened, and Dunallan himself appeared.

‘How kind is this!’ said she to him, her eyes filling as she spoke. Dunallan’s own bore traces of recent softness. He inquired tenderly for Catharine’s health.

‘Quite, quite well. May I now go to my father, or shall I disturb him?’

‘No, Catharine, you cannot disturb him; he says your presence has restored to him all that he really values on earth.’

‘My dear father!’ said Catharine tenderly, and turning hastily away to go to him.

He received her with eager fondness. After a few moments he began to talk of Dunallan.



‘I had formed a most erroneous opinion both of him and of his religious sentiments, Catharine,’ said he. ‘He is the most feeling man I ever saw ; and, instead of being severe and contemptuous, as I supposed his singular opinions led him to be, he has the humblest heart of any man I ever conversed with.’

Catharine could not refrain from tears while her father continued thus to praise Dunallan.

‘My dear father,’ said she, ‘you had indeed formed most erroneous notions of Mr Dunallan. I too had suffered myself to be so prejudiced against him, that I look back still with shame and grief to the time he formerly spent under your roof. Now, I hope, we both know how to value him.’

---

## CHAPTER XVII.

FOR the first fortnight Catharine scarcely ever left her father’s room. He seemed revived by the presence of his beloved child, and to grudge losing sight of her for a moment. Dunallan’s society soon also became almost as necessary to him as Catharine’s. He constantly desired to have them both near him. Catharine was now, therefore, constantly seeing Dunallan, and in such circumstances, as to do away every feeling but that of gratitude. His gentleness to her father—his affectionate kindness, and feeling attentions, increased in proportion as Lord Dunallan’s esteem and affection increased for him. His manner to herself—mild, gentle, and polite, but again reserved, made her very unhappy ; yet she could not at times help thinking that his coldness was in some degree assumed. Often, while employed in those tender cares which her father’s situation required, she met Dunallan’s eyes, fixed upon her with looks of interest and admiration ; but in vain did she attempt to conjecture what could be the cause of his coldness, real or assumed. He was ever on the watch, also, lest she should suffer from fatigue, and to bear it for her. One evening, Lord Dunallan had fallen asleep, while Catharine, who stood behind his chair, supported his head on her bosom. Lord Dunallan’s complaint prevented



his sleeping but in a sitting posture ; he now seemed to find his attitude an easy one, for his sleep was unusually calm and tranquil. Catharine became pale from fatigue, but refused to resign her place to Dunallan.

‘I would not disturb him for the world,’ whispered she to him, when he, in the same tone of voice, entreated her to resign her charge to him.

He stood near her in evident uneasiness.

‘You will kill yourself, Catharine ; I entreat you, suffer me. I shall not disturb your patient.’

‘No, no—do not ask me ; I am not fatigued.’

Dunallan remained near her, apparently miserable, till Lord Dunallan awoke ; and after that evening, watched with such care, that he was always ready to support Lord Dunallan’s drooping head, when it appeared that he was weary of his usual supports.

A thousand similar attentions, performed with the utmost gentleness and feeling, while, at the same time, an expression of deep sadness clouded his own countenance and manner, excited feelings of gratitude and interest in Catharine, which she could not repress, and which daily increased.

Dunallan also frequently conversed with Lord Dunallan on the subject of religion, which was the only one in which he now took any continued interest ; and Catharine listened with delighted attention to his animated, and feeling, and convincing replies, to the cavilling arguments of her father. Dunallan went patiently over and over the same ground, giving a playful turn to the peevishness of sickness, and, with persevering earnestness, placing his subject in every varied point of view. His society became each moment more necessary to Lord Dunallan. Catharine, too, was now so constantly with her father, that Elizabeth, who found herself of no real use, at last consented to her entreaties to return to Mr Melville, whose patience at her absence seemed wholly exhausted.

Catharine, however, almost regretted having suffered her friend to go, when, on the first day after her departure, she found herself alone with Dunallan. It was after dinner, and the servants had left the room. This was the only hour in the



day in which Lord Dunallan chose to be left alone, so Catharine had no excuse for quitting Dunallan. He now himself appeared embarrassed, and for once at a loss for conversation. Catharine first broke the silence.

‘Do you think my father recovers at all, Mr Dunallan?’

He hesitated, ‘What is your opinion, Catharine?’

‘I cannot say that I think he does; but I am so apprehensive—perhaps you see differently.’

Dunallan seemed unwilling to answer her question.

‘I am prepared to hear any opinion, Mr Dunallan.’

‘Your father himself has little hope of recovery, Catharine. Whatever is the event, I think we ought to feel thankful for this, as it has the best of all effects. At your father’s age, few pleasures remain for us in this world. Ought we, Catharine, to wish for our own sakes to keep those we love here, when those years are come in which they say, “I have no pleasure in them?”’

‘Oh no,’ replied Catharine. ‘If my father thought and felt on all subjects as you do, Mr Dunallan, I could forget my own wishes; but ——’ she stopt, and sighed heavily.

‘Your father, Catharine, when I was last here, was an avowed infidel. He now wishes to find that the Christian religion is true. If you remember what I wrote you were my own sentiments at one time of my life, you will feel that, of all men, I ought least to lose hope of others. He who taught me to differ, can in a moment impart to another a greater portion of that light which I have unworthily received.’

Catharine was moved, for Dunallan spoke as if he deeply felt what he expressed. ‘You know always how to impart comfort at least, Mr Dunallan,’ replied she, with emotion. ‘And now that I have an opportunity, suffer me to express the gratitude which I confess almost oppresses me, for all your unwearied kindness to my father—your patience—your constant goodness.’ Her eyes filled with tears, and she rose and turned away to conceal them.

Dunallan followed her. ‘*Gratitude* again, Catharine! Why do you still use that expression to me? When we parted, before I went abroad, you allowed me to call myself your friend. You



yourself invited me to assume the privileges of friendship. You allowed me to hope that you were pleased with my feeling the affection of a friend for you. I have never claimed more, yet you have treated me as a stranger, or rather as an exacting, unreasonable being, whom you dread to offend; for whose acts of common kindness you must feel an oppressive sense of gratitude. What have I done to give you cause for all this, Catharine?’

Catharine was so astonished by this address as to be quite unable to answer a word.

‘I detest all concealments,’ resumed Dunallan. ‘On my part there shall be none; and I will now acknowledge, that my letters, at least some of them, during my absence, I now regret having written. I do not ask you to remember the cause—the style of your letters; nothing should have made me for an instant forget how I ought to have acted towards you. Forgive me, Catharine, for having been led, even by you, into feelings of resentment, which towards you could only last till I again had an opportunity of seeing and feeling the perfect simplicity, the ingenuous openness of your character; the certainty, that when you were in error, it was the consequence of cruel delusion and self-deception. But I go too far; all I wish to say is, that I still feel for you all the friendship I did when we parted. Can you, Catharine, no longer regard me as you then did?’

‘I can, Mr Dunallan,’ answered Catharine, holding out her hand to him; ‘but I too hate all concealments; surely it was not I who first—do I quite understand you?’ She blushed, and proceeded hesitatingly: ‘Was I deceived, did I deceive myself, in thinking that your letters were strangely changed in style before mine were?’

Dunallan shook his head. ‘Ah! Catharine,’ replied he, ‘do not attempt to say more; it will not succeed. I ask not for your confidence any farther till you choose to give it me. Let us say no more of the past. We shall only remember, that all is again between us as it was when we parted at Arnmore.’

Catharine felt pleased but unsatisfied, and turned confusedly away from Dunallan’s inquiring looks.

‘Think no more now of what is past, dearest Catharine,’



said he, gently. 'If at any future time you should feel disposed to treat me with more confidence, do not suffer yourself to be prevented by a consciousness of having erred, but remember how I attempted to win *your* confidence; and that though, for your own sake, I can never assist you to palliate any error, yet you know how trivial I must consider yours compared to my own. Forgive me, since I have ventured thus far, if, for once, I allude to another subject. You know, Catharine, that as a husband I deserve most deeply to suffer. In so far as I could do so alone, I should wish to bend in humble submission to a retribution I feel to be so just; but in some points it is impossible for me ultimately to suffer alone. And now forgive me, dearest Catharine, for having been thus open with you, and let me no longer detain you from your father.'

Dunallan seemed as if he wished to relieve Catharine from supposing herself obliged to give him any answer, and she was so utterly at a loss to comprehend what his last words meant, that she suffered him to lead her to her father's apartment, without attempting to say one word.

Lord Dunallan's emaciated countenance brightened with pleasure as they entered. 'My Catharine,' said he, 'how that smile of yours chases away all my gloomy thoughts.'

'Why were your thoughts gloomy, my dearest father?'

'Because the grave is a gloomy subject of thought, Catharine. But I will not banish the roses from your cheek by my gloom. Dunallan, we must find some amusement for my child here, since she will not seek it elsewhere.'

'No, no, my dear father,' said Catharine, with assumed cheerfulness; 'it is your amusement we shall seek.'

Lord Dunallan shook his head, with an expression of the most hopeless despondency.

'Perhaps, my dear Lord,' said Dunallan, 'Catharine may know some charm to take away the gloom, even from the subject you mentioned.'

'Oh, no, Dunallan! to shut my eyes for ever on that sweet face, is the darkest ingredient of the gloom.'

'But it is not for ever, my dearest father. It may be but a short separation, even should you go before your child.'



‘Ah! my Catharine, it is easy with your youth and health to talk of death and the grave; but, my child, when those roses are withered, and those luxuriant locks are thin and grey, and the grave seems near, and another state of existence really approaches, then, my child, a film seems to fall from the eyes; all that we value before appears in its true insignificance, the vain trappings of a past day; and the state of the immortal spirit, that which before could scarcely fix a thought, then seems of an importance so vast, that the short time, failing nature tells us, we have to attend to it, seems so inadequate, that we shrink in despair from the task. I have often, my Catharine, repented of having consulted your inclination so little in the choice of your husband. I still blame myself for this; but Heaven has rewarded your obedience to an unreasonable father, by giving you a friend and protector, who will before it is too late, lead you into the knowledge of those important truths your father never taught you.’

Catharine could not restrain her tears while her father spoke thus despondingly and tenderly. She was seated close by him, and in silence pressed the hand she held to her heart. Dunallan had stood near them. He now sat down on the other side of Lord Dunallan, who immediately held out his hand to him.

‘My dear Dunallan, this is sad melancholy work for you, to watch a wretched old man, dying in the blue devils.’

‘I do not consider dying such a melancholy work as you seem to do, my Lord,’ replied Dunallan, in a cheerful, though serious tone of voice. ‘I have seen people die who would not have wished to live had it been in their power; young people, too, who had met with nothing to teach them the insignificance which your Lordship has just said characterises every pursuit, when viewed from the entrance into another state.’

‘I can easily conceive that of young people,’ replied Lord Dunallan. ‘They still believe the creed their mothers taught them; and, conscious of innocence, they look with certainty to those scenes of felicity they have been led to believe awaits them in an immortal state. But after having entertained infidel principles, and having run the course of—Oh! Dunallan, you do not know what a life I have led—I——’



‘I know, my Lord,’ interrupted Dunallan, ‘that in the eyes of the world your character has been as fair, or more so, than that of most other men, and therefore must regard your present view of it as a proof that the light of divine truth is rising on your mind, by which alone we can see what is requisite to satisfy the laws of God. You know, my Lord, it is my firm belief, that no human being can be justified by his own merits in the sight of his Creator.’

‘But you always return to that canting mystery,’ replied Lord Dunallan, peevishly; ‘who can comprehend your meaning when you talk of imputing the merits of another to rational and accountable creatures?’

‘I do return to that mystery, my Lord, because I know of nothing else to turn to,’ replied Dunallan, mildly. ‘You say, my Lord, that death is alarming to you, because you feel apprehensive that your life has not been so spent as to be found worthy at the great reckoning. I say that I believe no man’s has been so spent; and that we are lost for ever, unless at that day we have other grounds to rest our hopes of heaven upon, than our imperfect obedience,—I may say, our continued disobedience to the laws of God.’

Lord Dunallan continued for some time silent, and in deep thought, then said, ‘I have not been worse than other men. For many years I have lived free from every vice; in youth, to be sure—but few men can restrain their passions in youth: the Being who created us with those passions will excuse their excess. He is good and merciful.’

Dunallan sighed deeply, ‘And would you rather, my Lord, trust that the Divine Being who has said, “that no unbeliever, no impure person, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;” would you rather trust to an idea for which there is no ground in Scripture, that his pity will lead Him to break his word, than receive the forgiveness of your sins, and admission into heaven on his own terms?’

‘And what are these terms?’

Catharine looked at Dunallan with admiring gratitude, when he began again, for perhaps the hundredth time, to answer this question. He did so with the utmost gentleness of voice and manner.



‘The terms revealed to us in Scripture, my Lord, are extremely simple, and I think, completely suited to the state of your feelings. They are merely these:—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” You have said, my Lord, that you cannot believe. This state of mind is also anticipated in Scripture; and we are told that “Faith is the gift of God;” and again, “That we must ask and we shall receive. That God will not despise the humble and the contrite heart. That He is the hearer of prayer.”’

‘Dunallan, I *cannot* pray.’

‘Could you listen to the prayers of another, my Lord?’

‘Of a clergyman? certainly not—the whole neighbourhood would hear of it.’

‘Not a clergyman’s then, my Lord, but your son’s.’

‘Yours, Dunallan?’ He seemed affected. Dunallan looked at Catharine. She smiled through the tears that had filled her eyes on Dunallan’s proposal, and immediately knelt down by her father. He laid his hand tenderly on her head for a moment, then covered his face, while Dunallan poured out his soul in fervent prayer to his Creator. He seemed to feel the exact state of Lord Dunallan’s mind, and entered into his dark and confused conceptions of religion, and suited his ardent and humble requests so completely to the wants of the immortal spirit when, ignorant and apprehensive, it trembles on the brink of eternity, that Lord Dunallan’s enfeebled frame was scarcely able, while he listened, to support the emotions of his soul.

‘Leave me,’ said he, when Dunallan rose from his knees; ‘leave me, my Catharine; leave me alone, dear excellent Dunallan.’

Catharine hesitated on seeing the perturbed expression of his countenance, but Dunallan took her hand and gently drew her away.

‘My dear Catharine,’ said he, when they reached another apartment, ‘there are some feelings which cannot brook observation.’

Catharine remained silent, and continued, leaning on Dunallan’s arm, slowly to pace about the room. He too remained



silent and deeply thoughtful. 'What an astonishing change the approach of death makes on every feeling and power of the soul!' said he at last. 'How vividly it shows the true nature and value of things!'

'Yes,' replied Catharine, 'I could wish its approach could always seem near for that cause. But, Mr Dunallan, do you think the dread of its approach has the same effect on every mind?'

'No, my dear Catharine, I too well know that it has not,' replied Dunallan sighing, or rather almost groaning, as he spoke. 'I have seen the approach of death have no other effect than that of increasing the desire of accomplishing earthly schemes; and the immortal spirit depart, satisfied with this as if it had performed all its part. But what an awakening would be there!' Dunallan shuddered, and clasped his hands together with alarming energy.

'Ah!' said Catharine, 'if people only knew the rest the mind feels when it has discovered, even imperfectly, the end of its existence!'

'Yes, Catharine, but mankind will not believe this, though assured of it by the wisest and the best. The ear will not, cannot hear, till it is unstopped—the eye cannot see—the heart cannot receive, till they are touched by a power from Heaven. How intense is their blindness, who see something to interest in every object and every inquiry under the sun, but in that which relates to the future existence of the soul; and who yet boldly avow, that they discover proofs of immortality in their own minds—who will spend an existence in exploring into the minutest, and least valuable of the works of God, and be esteemed wise, while they turn with apathy from a Revelation which discloses to them the terms on which depends the happiness or misery of their immortal spirits during eternity. But, my dear Catharine, is it from your own experience, may I ask, that you have learnt to value so highly that rest of the mind which you described?'

'Yes,' replied Catharine, blushing; 'but I only know what it is. I do not yet possess it always; but knowing what it is, and where it is to be found, prevents at least the possibility of believ-



ing that the immortal part can be satisfied with what is not like itself, immortal. But, indeed, Mr Dunallan, we must now return to my father.'

'Do you fear that I shall ask you more questions about yourself, Catharine?'

'No—yes—I do not know why I should not like to answer you on this subject—but——'

'It is perfectly natural, my dear Catharine; but do not fear that I shall annoy you by my anxiety to know the state of your religious feelings and opinions—they cannot be concealed, Catharine—yet when you can, if ever that time shall come, trust me with this most precious part of your sentiments, you will find me very grateful.'

They had now reached the door of Lord Dunallan's apartment. Catharine stopt and said, 'I shall attempt to overcome my reserve, for my own sake, if you will promise to correct my errors.'

'I promise to tell you frankly *my* opinion at least,' replied Dunallan. They then entered Lord Dunallan's apartment. He was sitting with his head leaning on his hand. He raised it on their entrance, and smiling more placidly than Catharine had observed him do since her return, 'Come, my dear young instructors,' said he, 'I now like your lessons—Dunallan, how shall I thank you for your patience with your old and stubborn pupil?—But, Catharine, my child—Dunallan—I feel very faint, assist me to the sofa.'

Catharine and Dunallan assisted him, and laid him gently as he wished, and Catharine held a cordial to his lips. He smiled as he received it from her; but some internal failure of nature checked his smile, and for an instant brought a livid paleness, and an expression of sudden and startling alarm over his countenance. But this was soon passed, and he raised his eyes to heaven, full of such deep humility, and lowly tenderness of spirit, as almost to change the cast of his usually proud and stern features. Catharine looked at Dunallan; she saw he was alarmed. He left the room, and returned immediately with the medical gentleman, who was in constant attendance. Lord Dunallan had been subject to these faintish attacks during the



whole of his illness, but now he seemed more than usually gone. The doctor felt his pulse.

‘Mr Crawford, you are too late,’ said Lord Dunallan, faintly—‘I am gone.’

Mr Crawford prescribed a restorative.

‘You have been right, Crawford,’ said his Lordship—‘you told the truth—I thank you—Fare you well—leave me now—I wish to say something to my daughter.’

Crawford left the room.

Lord Dunallan looked at Catharine, who hung over him in speechless terror. ‘My child, I was prepared for this. Crawford did not think I should have survived so long, but God has mercifully spared me until ——.’ He stopt again, becoming very faint—attempted to speak, but suddenly starting, fell back into Dunallan’s arms.

Catharine chafed his temples—his hands—used every means to recal him, but the spirit was gone for ever.

Dunallan assisted Catharine in all her attempts. Mr Crawford also indulged every wish, which in her almost distracted state of feelings seemed to promise a ray of hope, though he gently expressed his fear that every effort was vain.

Dunallan at last took her hand in his. ‘My dear Catharine, we expected this. How easily, how placidly has he left us! We ought not to wish it otherwise.’

Dunallan’s soothing and tender tone of voice gave the desired turn to Catharine’s feelings. She burst into an agony of tears, and, disengaging herself from him, she clasped her arms round her father’s insensible remains, and wept without restraint. Dunallan was much affected, and did not for some time attempt to check her natural emotion. At last he again gently attempted to withdraw her from the scene.

‘Remember, my dearest Catharine, who sends this affliction. We must believe that all His dispensations are dictated by His love, and attempt to prove our belief of this, and our gratitude, by resigning ourselves to His Heavenly will.

Catharine allowed him to lead her away a few steps, but then turned back. ‘I cannot leave him, Mr Dunallan; let me see him carried to bed. Oh, my dear, my kindest father ——.’



She would again have thrown herself upon the lifeless corpse, but Dunallan put his arm around her, and gently drew her away.

‘Allow me, trust me, Catharine, to see all done as you wish.’ He then led her reluctantly to her apartment. She entreated him to leave her, and return to the room they had left. Dunallan obeyed; and Catharine, when left alone, struggled to gain command of her thoughts and recollection; and, throwing herself on her knees, she attempted to raise her confused and agitated thoughts to Heaven, and to implore resignation to the Divine will. But her mind was unable to command itself. She continued on her knees, unconscious of the presence of Martin, who had followed and stood near her in silent grief. At last some one knelt down beside her. She started and looked up. ‘Mr Dunallan!’ exclaimed she.

‘Let us remain here, my Catharine; all is as you wish elsewhere. Let us together ask the support of Him, who “hath smitten and will heal you.”’

Catharine again bent down her head, and Dunallan, while he prayed, seemed to express the very inmost and undefined feelings of her heart. He expressed the most fervent gratitude for the light which had beamed on the departed spirit, before it had passed into its new and everlasting state of existence; and she then dared to trust that the light was real. She became collected and composed as he proceeded. He prayed for her, that she might now be enabled to rely on her Creator as her father; that she might believe, and comprehend the glorious privileges of such a relation, the perfection of His character, who graciously called himself the father of the orphan, the perfection of His wisdom, His guidance, His power, His love, His tenderness; the happiness of those who trusted in Him, their security, their promise of light, and peace, and support in weakness. Dunallan’s voice trembled as he prayed for Catharine, and he seemed obliged to stop, because unable to command his feelings.

When he had finished, he entreated her to retire to rest. ‘To-morrow,’ said he, ‘I hope we shall be enabled to view this event with thankfulness.’

Catharine could not speak. Dunallan again ejaculated a



fervent entreaty for the presence of her heavenly Father, and then left her.

Catharine retired to bed, but not to sleep. She was, however, calm, and indulged in that tenderness of grief, which the recollection of the kindness and affection of her father inspired. Towards morning she fell asleep, and for a time forgot all her sorrows. But how painful is the waking after such repose! How bitter the first return to recollection, and to the reality of what has happened! Catharine felt all its misery. She did not leave her room that day till late in the evening. Dunallan met her with a calm seriousness of manner, which gradually restored that self-command which she had lost on again meeting him. His conversation, too, as it ever did, interested, and at the same time strengthened her mind, while his kindness soothed her heart.

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

A WEEK passed away. Dunallan seemed to have no object but Catharine in all he said and did. He led her to speak to him of her grief, and of all that was nearest her heart. Catharine unconsciously leant to him next to Heaven for support and consolation.

Several more weeks elapsed, and again Catharine began to think of self, and of the future. She felt resigned to that will which in depriving her of her last parent, had gilded his dying moments with hope, and spared her witnessing any severe suffering. She felt thankful for having had one to console her in her grief, and to mourn with her,—who had never for a moment ceased, in attempting to reconcile her to her loss, to lead her thoughts to the only true source of consolation and happiness,—who had seemed to feel so deeply for her, that he had forgotten every other pursuit, every other object, to attend to her. She now recollected his extreme tenderness towards her for the week following her father's death. She had then scarcely observed it; but now she remembered to contrast it



with the greatly colder, though still kind and gentle, manner he had more lately assumed. She still thought his coldness assumed; for she had remarked him check himself several times, and give a different turn to the tenderness of some expression he had just used. Yet why should he wish to appear to feel more coldly towards her than he really did? She had made no attempt to conceal her feelings from him; and those feelings had led her to impart to him almost every thought of her heart, and to meet him, after every interval of absence, with delight. It was on those occasions, she had observed, that he attempted to alter the meaning of the expressions of pleasure he used on first meeting her. Catharine in vain attempted to discover a cause for his wishing to repress his affection for her. She thought it would add to his happiness if he could love the woman to whom he was united for life. Her own happiness she now felt depended on him, as far as it could depend on any earthly being. At last she recollected what he had said about her letters—about delusion and self-deception—and a gleam of light seemed to break upon her mind. ‘There must be some mystery about those letters,’ thought she. She recollected his strange conduct on his first return to Arnmore after being abroad—his saying he would never ask an explanation from *her*—his having said, more lately, that he detested concealments—that her letters were an excuse for the style of his—‘Why should I not at least ask him,’ thought she, ‘what there was in my letters that displeased him? This does not intrude into his confidence farther than he chooses. Why should I risk the possibility of lessening his happiness if an explanation would prevent it?’ Yet she shrunk from the idea of asking this explanation. Perhaps it might produce nothing—perhaps it was only pity for her which had made him so tenderly kind. Her idea that he wished to conceal his feelings for her, might be a mere fancy. She was called to meet Dunallan before she had come to any resolution. He was unusually grave, or rather sad, and met her without any apparent feeling of pleasure. She even thought there was a shade of displeasure, or rather disappointment, on his countenance. She forgot all her wishes about an explanation regarding herself, in the fear that something had happened to grieve Dunallan. It



was now nearly two months since they had left Arnmore; and it struck her, that perhaps he might feel impatient to return thither, but was too delicate to propose her yet leaving Dunallan Castle.

‘I fear, Mr Dunallan,’ said she, ‘that your goodness to me has deterred you longer from returning to Arnmore than is perhaps convenient. I know you had reasons for hastening your return from abroad; I am ready to go back to Arnmore whenever you wish it.’

‘I have no immediate wish to return to Arnmore, Catharine. I think we ought to finish our arrangements here before we return. Those papers and letters ought to be examined. Do you not agree with me in thinking that every, the minutest wish, expressed in a will, should be complied with?’

‘I certainly do; but it pains me to think you should have the trouble.’

‘Again!’ interrupted Dunallan. ‘I must believe in time, Catharine, that you really wish to *pain* me by so repeatedly using such terms.’ He seemed really displeased.

Catharine’s eyes filled with tears. ‘If I really could wish to pain you for a moment, Mr Dunallan; if you can believe me capable of such ingratitude, surely nothing I can do is worthy of costing you the most trifling uneasiness.’

‘Forgive me, Catharine,’ said Dunallan, much softened; ‘you would if you knew what at this moment almost unmans me.’

Catharine looked alarmed.

‘Do not be alarmed, dear Catharine,’ said Dunallan; ‘*you*, indeed, have no cause. I have only just received a letter from my miserable brother-in-law, Harcourt, informing me that he is in Britain, and in the most wretched circumstances.’

‘And does he make any unpleasant proposal about the children?’ asked Catharine, anxiously.

‘No, none. He seems greatly changed. He has been compelled to leave India to escape his creditors. His worthless wife has abandoned him. He is now, in short, dear Catharine, in London—in the King’s Bench—in wretched health—without friends—and without the means of existence; and he adds, “with a conscience that is hell begun.”’



Catharine was shocked; but after a moment's silence, 'I think,' said she, 'if his conscience has been so dreadfully awakened by the wretched consequences of his past guilt, there may be better hope for the future.'

'Certainly,' replied Dunallan.

'Then why should you feel this intelligence so distressing?' asked Catharine, anxiously. 'If Mr Harcourt is truly changed, and truly wishes to reform, it will not be difficult to arrange worldly matters so as to make him tolerably comfortable. You know he is our brother,' continued she, gently; 'the father of our sweet little girls. Ought we not to hope the best, and attempt every means in our power to lead him back to the right path, while bad health and an awakened conscience would assist our endeavours?'

'Most assuredly, dearest Catharine,' replied Dunallan; 'my duty is plain; but I confess that, at this time, I find it difficult to perform. I cannot help turning from, and wishing to avoid it. But you have confirmed the dictates of my own conscience, and I must hesitate no longer.'

'I do not know the circumstances which make this duty so painful to you; but,' added she, earnestly, '*you*, Mr Dunallan, would, I am sure, find it far more painful to be conscious of having neglected any duty. But forgive me,' continued she, blushing deeply, 'for presuming to preach to you.'

'A thousand thanks, dear Catharine, for preaching to me. You preach truth; and,' added he, sighing heavily as he spoke, 'I must just submit, and again leave home.'

'Leave home!' exclaimed Catharine, becoming as pale as death.

'Yes, Catharine; Harcourt entreats, implores me to go to him. How can I, indeed, be of any real use to him unless I do so?'

Catharine felt faint and sick at heart, and leant back in her chair, unable to utter a word.

'Dearest Catharine,' said Dunallan, eagerly, 'you shall dictate to me in this matter. At this moment I regard it as my first duty to be guided by your wishes, whatever they are.'



‘I have no wishes,’ replied Catharine; and, bursting into tears, she disengaged herself from Dunallan, who would have detained her, and hurried to her own apartment. She there continued to weep and sob almost convulsively, so sudden and so overpowering was the idea that she was again so soon to be separated from Dunallan,—now almost her only friend,—and such a friend.

In a few minutes, Martin softly entered her room and presented a note from Dunallan, then immediately retired.

‘I have betrayed myself!’ exclaimed Catharine, bitterly. ‘How can he now avoid coming to an explanation?’ She scarcely dared open his note.

‘My dearest Catharine, shall I ever understand you? Need I say what that charm is which makes it so difficult for me to tear myself from home, my present home? Ask your own heart, Catharine, whether, if I knew all its secrets, I ought to say more? Surely thinking as you do, preaching as you so forcibly did to me within the last hour, you must feel that, on one subject, you would be more happy—more right, if you had no concealments with me. Yet, dearest Catharine, I only say this for your own sake. I do not urge you to give me your confidence on my own account; I will only say, that the slightest explanation on your part—the mere acknowledgment that you know to what I allude, would be most gratefully received by me—would be all that I should ever ask.

‘E. H. DUNALLAN.’

Catharine read this note once, and again, and again. ‘What on earth can he mean?’ thought she. Once more she read sentence by sentence.

‘Finds such difficulty in understanding me! Impossible, Dunallan! I am only too unguarded. If he knew all my secrets—what can he mean by this? More happy, more right. I am only to acknowledge that I know to what he alludes.’ In vain did Catharine attempt to find a meaning for Dunallan’s words. ‘He seems to consider me guilty of something I ought to confess to him,’ thought she, and her cheek glowed as she



thought. 'There is some strange mystery in all this. I will go, and at once ask an explanation.' She rose and went towards the door, but stopt, 'Why should *I* ask an explanation? If Dunallan has listened to any report against me—but it is impossible. Why should any one now wish to injure us in the opinion of each other?' She instantly recollected St Clair, and light seemed to flash upon her; but terror came with it. Never, never, would she seek an explanation which might involve Dunallan in a quarrel with St Clair. Such an event might have been the very aim of St Clair. 'But all this may be only a dream of my own imagination,' thought she, after having conjured up every frightful idea which followed such a supposition. She then recollected what Dunallan had said regarding her letters to him, and she was again as much at a loss as ever. But time passed, and it was necessary, in some way, to answer Dunallan's note. After several changes, she at last, in despair of expressing herself more guardedly, and at the same time openly, wrote as follows:—

'I scarcely know how to reply to you. Surely, Mr Dunallan, if you believe me to be in any error, you will not suffer me to continue so without pointing out to me what that error is. I am utterly unconscious of having any secrets—any concealments, with you on any subject, which the strictest sense of friendship, or esteem, or *duty*, would forbid me to have. I cannot acknowledge that I know to what you allude, for I have in vain attempted to understand you. I can say no more. Allow me, however, to *write*, instead of *saying*, good night; for I confess my head aches violently, in consequence of what has passed during the last two hours.

'C. DUNALLAN.'

Catharine sent her note to Dunallan, and then, for a time, listened to every sound, in the expectation of receiving an answer. None came, however. Martin at last appeared, but only with an inquiry on Dunallan's part.

'Shall I tell Mr Dunallan, Ma'am, that you are quite recovered? he seems so distressed and anxious.'



‘You may, Martin,’ replied Catharine, ‘though I am sure it is not true,’ thought she, as Martin left the room.

Catharine remained for the rest of the evening in her own apartment, in vain endeavouring to understand the meaning of Dunallan’s conduct towards her. She again attempted to recollect the contents of her letters to him during his absence, to which he had alluded in so strange a manner; but she could recollect nothing to account for all that had passed. At length after many and various unsatisfactory suppositions she determined, that, before she was again separated from him, she should attempt to ask an explanation, at least with regard to those letters. To this separation, however, she looked forward with dread. Why did he never seem to think she could accompany him? But why indeed, did he never do any thing she could understand, while his manner always conveyed an idea of the most perfect openness?

Next morning Catharine felt so conscious of having betrayed the state of her feeling to Dunallan, while his conduct and feelings towards her remained so inexplicable, that she dreaded again meeting him, and delayed it as long as she could, then entered the breakfast room, where he already was, with the greatest embarrassment of manner. Dunallan anxiously inquired for her health; but she received his inquiries with reserve and coldness, and his manner instantly became as cold and constrained as her own. He did not even allude to what had passed the evening before; and Catharine, though she had supposed she wished that he might, now felt relieved when he did not, and again ventured to raise her eyes to him when she spoke. He looked grave, and she thought displeased, and immediately after breakfast proposed resuming the examination of Lord Dunallan’s letters and papers. These were very numerous; and the cause of Lord Dunallan’s wish that they should be carefully examined was, that, amongst them he believed there was a correspondence between him and a person now high in power, respecting the representation of the county, which he had left a written wish Dunallan should see, but which he had not so marked as to distinguish it from his other numerous letters and papers. There were other letters and papers which it was



necessary to examine; and during this (occasionally very tiresome) occupation, Dunallan had found means to mingle conversation so successfully, that Catharine had got through her labours without fatigue. After being busily employed for some hours on this morning, Dunallan proposed walking out, to which she readily consented. It was now towards the end of March, the weather clear and invigorating, and nature beginning to wear the appearance of spring. Dunallan and Catharine seemed equally to feel its influence, and the coldness and reserve of both gradually passed away. Dunallan was again as interesting in conversation as he always was, and Catharine as open and undisguised as if the note of the preceding evening had never been written. Many things, however, as they proceeded, recalled her father to Catharine's recollection, and mingled a feeling of deep sadness with the pleasure produced by the beauty and freshness of the objects around her. Dunallan seemed to guess what her thoughts were, and soon turned the conversation to subjects which led her to give expression to her thoughts, while his manner became as kind and gentle as ever.

‘The day is so charming, I for a time forgot every thing else,’ said Catharine; ‘but how seldom do we feel unmixed pleasure, even for a few moments. I have observed this so much, that now, whenever my heart feels light, I begin to look about for the grief I had forgotten!’

‘’Tis too true, Catharine; yet I believe it is best. Truth must be best, and there is no time on this side the grave in which we have not something either to mourn for or to dread.’

‘But that is a very gloomy thought, Mr Dunallan.’

‘It appears so, but what happiness we may enjoy cannot consist, or rather ought not to consist, in delusion. Have your happiest moments, Catharine, been those in which you were most gay?’

Catharine thought for a little. ‘No, certainly. I have shed tears in my happiest moments, but they were tears of delight.’

‘Yes, Catharine; but delight which expresses itself by tears partakes of sadness. There will be no tears in heaven. And on earth, the most unmixed happiness is, I think, enjoyed in those moments when our hearts are most in unison with the in-



habitants of heaven, that is, when they are so completely devoted to the Lord of heaven, as to love all his dispensations, whatever they are.'

There was an expression of elevation in Dunallan's countenance when he said this, and his eyes were raised to the cloudless sky above them with such fulness of devotion, that Catharine felt how completely he was speaking from his own feelings. She remained silent. Dunallan turned to her.

'Do you not agree with me, Catharine?'

'I see *you* know what that unmixed happiness is,' replied she.

'I attempt to seek it, Catharine, but at this moment I do not quite succeed. I cannot feel entire submission to that duty which will again make me a solitary traveller, uncertain whether on my return I may not find you formal and respectful, and above all so insufferably grateful.'

Catharine wished to reply, but she was taken by surprise, and could not, and Dunallan, after a pause, began to talk on another subject.

On returning towards the house, Catharine observed that Dunallan's horses were in waiting for him.

'You are going to ride, Mr Dunallan?'

'Yes. I am so impatient to hear how poor Harcourt is, and what is to be my own fate, that I am myself going to ride to the village for my letters.'

'Do you recollect that the village is seven miles off?'

'I do,' replied Dunallan, 'but I have still two hours before dinner. Adieu, dear Catharine;' and hurrying from her, he mounted his horse, kissed his hand several times, and was soon out of sight.

These two hours Catharine passed in painful anxiety, and in conjecturing what could be the cause of Dunallan's extreme unwillingness to leave her, for kind and gentle as he was, his conduct said most plainly that *regard* for her was not the cause. In vain she thought over every circumstance she could recollect that could throw light on the subject. At last she observed from her window Dunallan rapidly approaching, and forgetting everything in her impatience to know the result of his hurried ride, she flew down stairs to meet him. His looks on entering the hall



confirmed all her fears. He seemed grave and sad, and disappointed. On seeing her, however, a smile of pleasure for a moment brightened his countenance.

‘I must go immediately, Catharine,’ replied he to her anxious and inquiring looks. ‘Poor Harcourt is very ill.’

‘*Immediately?*’ repeated she, repressing as much as she could her regret and disappointment.

‘Immediately, dear Catharine. I have a letter from the physician who attends Harcourt. He thinks very ill of his case.’

Dunallan led Catharine into the nearest apartment, and gave her the letter he had just received. It was humanely and feelingly written, and concluded with these words:—‘I hope you will forgive my adding, that it seems carrying the punishment too far in the friends of this unfortunate young man so completely to abandon him, when he has not above a few weeks to live, to all the wretchedness, not only of his own guilty conscience, but to that also arising from the carelessness and neglect of those heartless mercenaries who can alone be found in the wretched place he now inhabits.’

‘Ought I to resist that appeal, Catharine?’ asked Dunallan, as she returned the letter to him.

‘Certainly not,’ replied she, sighing deeply.

‘I have been thinking, dear Catharine,’ resumed Dunallan, ‘that as your cousin Elizabeth cannot come to you, perhaps you might find pleasure in spending a short time with her while we are separated.’

‘I certainly should,’ replied Catharine.

‘Well then, dear Catharine, if you will allow me to conduct you to her, I shall feel absence less painful when I know you are so happily situated.’

‘And how soon, Mr Dunallan, must you go?’

‘I cannot remain here after to-morrow, or if you could travel so early, my dearest Catharine, before breakfast, perhaps at seven o’clock the morning after.’

Catharine’s heart sunk on hearing that the dreaded separation was so near; and on attempting to reply she burst into tears. She soon, however, succeeded in suppressing her emotion, which Dunallan now made no attempt to soothe or overcome, though



his voice, when he again addressed her, completely betrayed the softened state of his own feelings. He only spoke, however, of indifferent matters, such as finishing the examination of papers, and other arrangements.

The evening was devoted to these employments, and passed heavily away.

Part of next morning was spent in the same way; and when at last Dunallan informed Catharine, that every thing necessary was completed; though she felt relieved, she also felt as if, not only her separation from him was to be her next sad task, but as if in finishing all the arrangements directed by her father, she had now indeed put a close to all intercourse with him. She left Dunallan, and went to those apartments which had been her father's. She had spent many, many hours since his death in those apartments, in resting her head on that couch where he had breathed his last, and indulging the melancholy which the remembrance of his kindness inspired. His books, his large chair, all remained just as he had left them. She now wept bitterly over those sad remembrancers. She again laid her head where she had last seen that of her dying father. She recalled his beloved countenance, his kindly, affectionate looks, his smile of joy whenever she approached, and her tears flowed without control, yet her grief was mixed with a feeling of tenderness and gratitude to Heaven. The last expression of her father's countenance was still vividly impressed on her memory, and she dared to indulge the hope that she would be led on in the straight and narrow way, till at the close of her pilgrimage, she might again meet this first known and beloved being who had entered before her on that new and untried existence to which she too was travelling. Oppressed and sad, Catharine remained indulging such ideas, which gradually tended to compose and elevate her feelings above all the passing pains, and attachments, and disappointments of a fleeting world, until hearing some one enter the ante-chamber in search of her, she at last forced herself away, locking the door of the apartment in which she had last seen her father, determined that henceforth it should be inhabited by no one but herself.

On meeting Dunallan at dinner, he seemed, by the soothing



tenderness of his manner, to guess how she had been employed, and soon by his conversation, in some degree, chased away the melancholy which had nearly overpowered her.

As the evening advanced, however, Dunallan himself became more and more grave, and one subject weighed so heavily on Catharine's mind, that it rendered her almost silent, while she continued to revolve in her thoughts whether there could be any impropriety, any danger, any thing that could possibly wound or displease Dunallan in her indulging her wishes. This was in asking an explanation regarding her own letters to him during his former absence. At last, when the evening drew almost to a close, Dunallan, who had for some time also sunk into thoughtful silence, asked Catharine if he had her permission to write to her while away? There was something unusually cold and severe in the tone of Dunallan's voice, when he asked this.

Catharine looked up; Dunallan's eyes were fixed upon her, while he waited for her answer; she hesitated and blushed deeply.

'You do not wish to write to me, Catharine?'

'Mr Dunallan,' replied she, again blushing still more deeply, 'may I ask an explanation of what you once said to me respecting my former letters to you; only, however, as far as regards myself. Do you remember to what I allude?' This question cost Catharine so much confusion, that she did not perceive the impression it made on Dunallan. She looked down, and waited for his reply to what she thought was perhaps an improper request, without daring to raise her eyes. His brightened with pleasure. He looked in delight for some moments at her now pale and downcast and apprehensive countenance.

'I do remember most perfectly to what you allude, dear Catharine.'

'But surely you are mistaken, or there is something in what you said that I do not understand.'

'Oh, no, Catharine, I could not be mistaken. I remember those letters too well; and it is only a few days ago, that in the hope I might have in some degree mistaken their meaning, I again read them. But you shall judge for yourself whether I have been mistaken. I shall return them to you to dispose of



as you choose. If you can say, dearest Catharine, after you have read them, that your heart now feels they were too cold, too regardless of what I should feel on receiving them, I shall ask no more.' He then left the room, and returning in a few minutes, presented a packet to Catharine.

'I beg you will read those letters according to their dates,' said he, 'you will then perhaps remember to which of mine they were answers.'

Catharine promised to do as Dunallan wished, and then taking leave, hastened with the packet to her own apartment, wondering what Dunallan could have expected her to write, as she recollected that her only dread had been, on recalling the style of her letters to him, that of having too plainly indulged the feelings of the moment in some expressions.

She opened the first letter in the packet, but it seemed so short she could not believe it was that she had written in reply to Dunallan's long letter, in which he had so generously confided to her all the most private feelings and events of his life. But on examining dates, she found it was the first she could have written to him after his leaving England.

She began to read; but as she proceeded, she started with astonishment at the style. She looked at the address—the seal—the hand—all were her own. She again began to read; but before she had finished the half of the first page, she was convinced that the letter was not hers, and that some treachery had been employed to destroy the happiness of Dunallan and herself. She had gathered up the letters, and was returning to inform Dunallan of her suspicions, when she was struck with the apparent improbability of such a story. 'Would Dunallan believe that any one could thus exactly imitate her hand, that any one would dare to open letters addressed to him, and change their meaning?'

She again sat down in despair. There was one being in the world, who she knew could imitate her hand-writing exactly, and that of every one he chose. It had been his boyish pastime and delight. This was St Clair; and she instantly felt certain that he was the author of all her late unhappiness from Dunallan's unaccountable conduct. She recollected the dark expres-



sion of his countenance the last morning she had seen him, and her suspicions were confirmed. But she also recollected the pride and violence of his character, and again shuddered at the idea of Dunallan's attempting to seek from him any explanation on such a subject. Yet she feared that she could thus only clear herself to Dunallan. She soon, however, determined never to clear herself at such a risk, and began again to read the letter Dunallan had so long believed to be her answer to his kind and open avowal of all his errors, and his warm and feeling expressions of interest in herself. She felt sick at heart as she proceeded.

‘MY DEAR SIR,

‘I received your very long letter, dated a few days ago. I ought, and do thank you for this new proof of confidence in me, and hope I shall still act so as to deserve it. The account you give of the death of your friend Mr Churchill affected me much, and I sincerely pity you for having lost such a friend. Allow me again to repeat my grateful thanks to you for the interest you express in my happiness. Mrs Oswald is very kind and attentive to me; and I still endeavour to find pleasure in those occupations you pointed out to me as most useful to you in your absence, and most beneficial to me. I hope when you return I shall be so happy as to meet with your approbation. My father is still at Dunallan Castle, and is to remain there for some months. I do not mean to leave Arnmore, and I hope this determination will satisfy you. I still only wish to know your desires; and whatever mine might have been, I shall now leave no means untried to teach myself to feel,

‘Your affectionate and dutiful

‘C. DUNALLAN.’

Catharine clasped her hands, and raised her imploring eyes to Heaven, when she had finished this cold and trifling letter, with its meanly cruel conclusion.

‘What shall I do? Can I leave Dunallan in the belief that I could write such an answer to his letter? Kind, forgiving Dunallan!’ She burst into tears. ‘No, no, he must be un-



deceived. But how can I undeceive him? That vile St Clair, who could stoop to such villany, what might he not do in revenge, if he knew that I had detected and betrayed his vileness?' She read the other letters,—they were colder, and still more repining. 'What can I do?' exclaimed she aloud; and starting up, she again determined to go to Dunallan, and assure him she had never written the letters he had given her. But she again stopt in despair. Dunallan's danger from the hatred of St Clair, should he make inquiries, and discover what she believed to be the truth, rushed into her mind, and overcame every other feeling, even the desire to vindicate herself. She again sat down in deep and painful thought, but soon had recourse to her ever-powerful refuge in difficulty. She threw herself upon her knees, nor did she rise from them till she felt able and willing to leave the event in the hands of the All-wise, and All-powerful, and All-good disposer of every circumstance in her life. She then retired to calm, and undisturbed, and peaceful rest, feeling sweetly and confidently sure that she and Dunallan were safe under 'the shadow of the wings of the Almighty.'

Early next morning she awoke in the same exalted state of feeling. The carriage was already at the door, and preparations making for the journey before her. She had determined what she should do before she had quitted her room. Dunallan was in the hall to meet her, and she received him with composed, though downcast, looks.

'I fear I am making you travel too early, Catharine.'

'No indeed. Have I detained you?'

'Not at all; but I must now hurry you away.'

She gave him her hand. After following her into the carriage, he still detained it in his; and the door was scarcely closed upon them when he turned to her.

'Catharine, I must ask what your opinion of your letters now is. Forgive my impatience; but do they not plead my excuse with you, for any appearance of chagrin or disappointment in mine?'

'Mr Dunallan,' replied Catharine solemnly, and turning to him as she spoke, 'I never wrote those letters; they are not mine.'



Dunallan looked at her in astonishment. 'Not yours, Catharine!'

'I see you do not believe me,' said she, turning away, and bursting into tears. 'Indeed, how is it possible you should?'

'Dearest Catharine, you can say nothing I will not believe; but what did you say? Did I understand you? were those letters not written by you?'

'No, never. Could you believe I had written such a letter as that one, in reply to your generous confidence, and not have detested me?'

Dunallan was silent for a few moments.

'Catharine,' said he at last energetically, 'I will then leave nothing unexplained. The cold formality of your letters to me did indeed pain me more than I can easily tell you; but another letter fell into my hands, which excited feelings I hope you will never be able to conceive; and which I confess was the cause of my sudden return home. I have this letter with me; indeed it is always with me, because I did not wish to destroy it, yet dreaded its falling into any hands but those who would have delivered it to you. I once said I should never ask an explanation from you,—I meant respecting this letter, which I thought you must have guessed had fallen into my hands, but now—perhaps ——'

'I entreat you let me explain every thing regarding myself,' said Catharine, earnestly.

Dunallan then produced a letter, from which he tore the envelope, and presented it to her. He then turned away, and seemed busily engaged in looking at the objects seen from the carriage window.

Catharine trembled as she opened this letter. The address was written in her hand; but beneath it was added, in Dunallan's writing, 'Addressed by mistake to me;' and, on another part of the letter, 'To be given unopened to Mrs Dunallan, in the event of my death. E. H. DUNALLAN.' Catharine began to read; but, after the first few words, could scarcely proceed. She however persevered.

'You have convinced me, my dear friend, that there is nothing



really wrong in my corresponding with you, since, as you say, it is only the expression of soul. I shall again, therefore, indulge in that pleasure. I do not disavow the misery I feel when I reflect on the tie which binds me for ever to a being so singular,—so unlike whatever could inspire affection in me. Yet, my friend, he is good and gentle to me, and I really wish to feel for him, at least gratitude. I know not what has taken him abroad, but I believe his motive is good. You ask me if I write frequently to Mr Dunallan? I do; and you would pity me on the days I have to fulfil this task. Yet, I am wrong, and blame myself for not feeling more kindness towards him. Indeed, before he left me, his mildness and goodness had so far won upon me, that I at least felt benevolence—or I do not know what. But adieu to this painful subject; only I entreat that in your letters you never mention him but with respect. You will pain me if you do otherwise. I admire your definition of the word friendship:—"That kind of love which will not be changed by death. The passion of the soul." You ask me, do I feel this for you? my friend! If I understand you, I do. O how cheerfully would I lay down my life, and all that it now promises, to meet you and one other friend in another state—you and my Elizabeth. But this is not allowed us. We must live apart; we must disguise the feelings of our hearts, and pretend to love where we are indifferent; and to be indifferent where we love, till the few short years of our painful existence terminate. I think, my friend, you will scarcely recognise your gay and playful tormentor, as you used to call me; but writing to you recalls every idea of lost happiness.—Adieu, friend of my soul. Yours,

‘CATHARINE DUNALLAN.’

Catharine's cheek glowed with shame and indignation, while she with difficulty got through this letter. She had unconsciously turned away from Dunallan, as much as she possibly could, while reading it; and when she came to its conclusion, she was so overwhelmed she could neither speak nor raise her eyes. ‘How could Dunallan forgive this?’ thought she. ‘How could he even bear me in his sight? Vile! cruel St Clair! Forgiving, generous, noble Dunallan!’



‘My dear Catharine,’ said Dunallan, ‘can you forgive my showing you that letter? I have done so that you might understand my past conduct, and in the hope that you would pardon it. I hastened home, because I thought the person who had written the letter to which I supposed that was the answer, could not be a safe friend,—because I knew you were too ignorant of the world, dearest Catharine, to know the danger of such friendship.’

‘And did you believe I had written that letter? Oh! Mr Dunallan, could you believe I had written such a letter, after the vows I had made, and still feel the kindness of a friend for one capable of such ——?’

‘I could have loved you as a brother, Catharine, whatever you had done,’ interrupted Dunallan. ‘How have I struggled to overcome a far stronger feeling than that of a brother for you! What a load have you removed from my heart, Catharine—from my conscience!’ He looked up to Heaven with an expression of the deepest gratitude. His eyes were softened almost to tears.

‘Dearest Catharine, dearest of human beings, can I at this moment ask more? Yet you have mentioned those vows which I promised I should never recal to your recollection; must I still keep that promise?’

‘Yes, Dunallan, I wish you still to regard me as your sister until ——’

‘Until when? dearest Catharine.’

‘Until I can convince you that I never did write those odious letters.’

‘I am convinced you never did, Catharine, completely convinced. Your character, which was the most painful enigma to me, while I feared you had written them—at least the last, is now all consistency—all ingenuousness. I have, I am now sure, been right in the way I have read its various feelings ever since I knew you,—and that blush and smile, too, Catharine.’

‘Oh! do not, I entreat you, attempt to read so exactly!’ exclaimed Catharine, blushing still more deeply.

‘Why, Catharine,’ asked Dunallan, looking smilingly at her

*lock*



blushing countenance, 'may I not at least ask if I am right in the conclusion I would now form, from all I have read?'

'I do not know—I believe not—I dare say you are mistaken.'

Dunallan took her hand in his. 'Oh, no, my Catharine, I am not mistaken. You are too artless,—your sweet looks are too true to your heart for any one to mistake you. Those very letters could not overcome the influence of that artlessness. Why, Catharine, do you wish to keep me miserable: am I now mistaken in thinking that what would make me happy—happier than I have words to express—the certainty that there was no thought, or wish, or feeling, in either of our hearts unknown, unshared by the other, would also add to your happiness? Am I wrong in believing that it is an idea of my still possibly feeling some uncertainty respecting those letters which prevents you at this moment, from being perfectly frank with me? I shall, the moment I arrive in London, attempt to clear up this strange mystery. I suspect I know who is the author of these cruel mistakes, but ——'

'For Heaven's sake,' interrupted Catharine, with terror in her looks, 'make no inquiry,—do nothing about those letters. You do not know the violence—the mad rashness of St Clair's character. Oh! if you do not wish to make me miserable, promise me you will do nothing in this affair!'

Dunallan smiled. 'I did not name Mr St Clair, Catharine.'

Catharine looked thunderstruck at her own imprudence.

'I see, Catharine, our suspicions have fallen on the same person, however,' resumed Dunallan, 'and I think probably with justice. I now remember his wonderful facility in imitating writing, particularly yours, Catharine. Oh! had this recollection come sooner! But surely my sweet, my Christian friend, you do not think I would so forget my duty to Heaven, as to seek this explanation in any way that would endanger the safety of either!'

'No, indeed. But, Dunallan, you do not know St Clair. Oh! if you have any value for my peace, promise me that you will not attempt to see him,' added she, the tears starting into her imploring eyes.'

Dunallan seemed rather surprised. 'Your peace is very dear



to me, Catharine. I shall make any promise you wish, to assure you of this.'

Catharine's face glowed. She did not quite understand the meaning of Dunallan's words and looks; and, taking his hand in both of hers, 'You are right, Dunallan,' said she, 'in thinking, that if every thought and feeling of my heart were known to you, I should be happier, for you can read it wrong.'

'Why, then, Catharine, lead me to read it wrong? Why sometimes make me believe you could be happy with me, and then say what leads me to fear there is some unknown objection—some unwillingness you cannot overcome? If there is, tell me, my Catharine,—if there is any imprudent friendship, any misplaced confidence, any thing that it might afterwards pain me to know; or tell me only that there exists some thing you do not wish imparted to me, I shall ask no further.'

'There is nothing I do not wish to impart to you, Dunallan. All I wish is this, that you would not make inquiries respecting those letters, because, for your sake, I fear the revengeful violence of St Clair's character; and because I do not believe his pride would ever suffer him to acknowledge to you that he had been guilty of such dishonourable conduct; and because,' added she, looking at Dunallan as she spoke, 'I should greatly dislike the idea of disgracing all the St Clairs, were such a discovery made by legal means. Yet, until I can prove to you that I never did write those letters, I cannot feel quite worthy of your confidence; and, until I do, I cannot wish to remember my vows.'

'But, Catharine, if you cannot be satisfied unless the mystery regarding those letters is cleared away, and yet will not suffer me to make any inquiries respecting them, what is to be done?'

'I shall myself attempt to come at an explanation.'

'But if you do not succeed, dear Catharine, which is most probable—'

'Why, then, I must just try to *prove* to you that it was *impossible* I should ever have written them.'

'I am convinced of that already, Catharine.'

'Well, if you will promise me not to seek, by *any* means, a meeting with St Clair on *any* subject, I shall, on your return,



if I cannot find means to convince you otherwise, and more satisfactorily, attempt to do so by being very obedient, and dutiful, and so forth,' said she quickly, and turning away as she spoke.

'And with your whole heart, Catharine, even if there had been no vows?'

'With my whole heart, Dunallan.'

*win* 'Then, my own Catharine, let us now really take those vows which one of us at least could not take before.' He then raised her hand in his to Heaven, and implored that blessing without which they could enjoy no real happiness, though all besides should smile upon them. He prayed for himself,—that the sweetest of all gifts might not wean his heart from the Giver; for both, that they might remember they were but strangers and pilgrims on earth, and that their dearest comforts would become injurious to their best and everlasting interests, if they led them to forget that better country, where alone there was perfect goodness and perfect happiness.

Catharine felt sweetly assured by Dunallan's appeal to Heaven for every blessing; and—but it would take volumes to tell all that was said, and remembered, and explained, in the first perfect confidence of the following hours. Besides, happiness *will* not describe, for no description satisfies hope, and to experience every description seems extravagant. As the day passed, however, and the time of separation approached, the bitter ingredients which mingle with every earthly enjoyment began to depress the feelings of the travellers. Still, however, duty said—humanity said, that Dunallan must proceed, and arrangements could not be altered; he ought not to delay till Catharine could accompany him. He, however, at length received Catharine's promise that if, on meeting Harcourt, he should find that he had any wish to see his children, a wish he had not yet expressed, she would accompany Mrs Oswald and them, and meet Dunallan in London. This promise, for a time, dispelled the gathering gloom, and again restored a degree of cheerfulness to their conversation.

'And so you think you have read all my thoughts ever since that dreadful day you arrived *so willingly* at Dunallan Castle,'



said Catharine, playfully. 'I suspect you must be mistaken, or surely you have an affection for some very great faults.'

'Shall I tell you what I read, my Catharine?'

She smiled. 'Will you not be very unmerciful?'

'Not more so, I promise, than you long were to me.'

'Oh! I believe I will not trust you; for people who are given to that kind of reading often make mistakes.'

'Perhaps they may; but I shall appeal to yourself whether I do.'

'Oh! no, no,' replied she; but Dunallan, smilingly proceeded.

'When I first came to Dunallan Castle, I was much prejudiced against you, Catharine, and on one point very near my heart, that of religion. I knew, for I had made most particular inquiry, that we probably should not have one idea in common.'

Catharine began to listen without opposition.

'Well,' proceeded Dunallan, 'I did arrive with a very heavy heart, and most melancholy anticipations for the future. I shall not say how much these were done away by the first impression your appearance made upon me. You had been represented to me as haughty and unfeminine in manner. I remembered that you had been so in some degree in your childhood; but I then saw you struggling, as you approached, against feelings which, however, overcame you, and gave to your appearance the most feminine softness. You afterwards did assume looks of haughtiness and contempt; and, when I found you seated in the drawing-room with several old ladies *standing* around you, while you, regardless of every one else, listless and careless, reclined in your chair, and received the incense of obsequious admirers, who made court to you by flattering your faults, I felt that my first pleasing impression was taking flight. When, however, the deep blush and look of consciousness followed your observance of the disapproving countenance of even an unwelcome and not esteemed stranger, I was convinced you had a mind, which, though it might be injured by prosperity and adulation, was still alive to the best impressions. Your obvious determination, immediately afterwards, to show me that you did not mean to change your conduct one hair-breadth, in consequence of my observations, seemed to me so perfectly natural in your circum-



stances, that I found it rather engaging to me ; and then your generous feeling of pity on that evening, when my persecutor St Clair, attempted to wound me in the tenderest point ; in short, on the first day I saw you, I had read so far that I had found you at least an object of very great interest to me. Every day afterwards increased that interest. I saw you were proud at least in one sense. You had little respect for the opinions of others ; and with your uniform openness showed the utmost indifference, or even contempt for those around you, at least most of them ; but at the same time you really did not think highly of yourself. You were often even humble in that respect, and always sincere. I soon saw you were strongly prejudiced against me, and that several of those around you endeavoured to increase that prejudice, yet you generally were just and candid, even to me ; and I saw with delight, when I expressed sentiments or opinions different from yours, and from others who sought to please you, by agreeing with you, that where mine were really more just and right, you almost always, before we left the subject, became of my opinion. This interested me very warmly in you, and gave me an ardent desire to use every means to lead you to judge and think for yourself. This interest in you, my dearest Catharine, I believe defeated its own object. I went too far, and you shrunk from my harshness.'

'Ah, I remember the time to which you allude,' said Catharine, 'and how justly you blamed me. I felt then that you were just, but I thought you severe.'

'I was unpardonably harsh ; but I suffered for it. You were then, Catharine, become very dear to me, and I deeply regretted having done anything to deprive myself of the little favour you sometimes before that had showed me. But, Catharine,' asked Dunallan, 'do you remember what followed ?'

Catharine thought for a little, and soon recollected the pleasure she had then felt on perceiving the power she had acquired over Dunallan's happiness. She blushed ; 'I do, Dunallan, and I believe you read justly on that occasion.'

'Ah, Catharine, that was the first time my penetration gave me any hope, at least transient hope. I saw that you had no



objection to feel your power over me. I determined, however, not to submit to being purposely tormented even by you, and I saw you understood me. I used every endeavour I could at that time to induce your father to delay our union. I hoped, perhaps, to gain a place in your esteem, for by that time I really would have felt it a painful sacrifice to duty had I succeeded in my endeavours to put a final stop to our marriage. Had I succeeded I must have fled from you.'

'Why?' asked Catharine.

'Because, my dearest Catharine, you did not then feel on the subject of religion as you now do.'

'But I should have had the same means to lead me to those feelings, the same instructions, the same example.'

'Yes, my Catharine, but a Christian must not venture to calculate on the success of means, unless he is confident that he is in the path of duty. Success does not depend on him, and he cannot hope for it when he has left the path of duty, and preferred the indulgence of his earthly affections to the plainest interests of his immortal soul; and chosen to place nearest his heart, and to give the most constant influence over his conduct, and over his affections, and in his family, to one who yet neither knows, nor loves, nor serves his Master. I should have had no hesitation on this subject. I too well knew how deceitful my own heart was to listen to its arguments on such a matter; and till the day on which I found I could no longer avoid fulfilling my promise to my father, I sincerely did all in my power, both for your sake and my own, to prevent, if possible, the fulfilment of a promise I had sinned in making, and would probably be led into continual temptation by fulfilling. But to return—after the day for our marriage was fixed, I saw that my hopes of gaining your affection were at an end. You felt yourself a sacrifice, and naturally regarded me with dread and aversion. You then really detested me. I then wrote those letters I before mentioned to you. I would have done any thing to restore you to peace; but while I watched continually for the possibility of assuring you that I would, you as carefully avoided me. You would not even look at me, or if you did; the expression of your countenance said, "Most hated and mistaken being, though



I sacrifice myself to my father's wishes, do not flatter yourself that one feeling of mine agrees with those wishes." "

'Oh, you have read *very, very* well,' said Catharine, laughing. 'And now, pray, what did my face say after that dreaded day was half over?'

'Why,' replied Dunallan, 'its language was very pleasing to me. It said, "Is this the man I thought so hateful,—this quiet, not very selfish, at least good sort of a harmless creature." "

'Oh, no, no,' interrupted Catharine, still laughing.

'What then?' asked Dunallan, laughing also.

'Oh, it was you who were reading. I did not promise to put you right; but now that you have shown me you can be wrong, I think you must go no farther.'

'Then, my Catharine, shall I tell you what I suffered when I could no longer think you the ingenuous, artless being I had supposed, so easily understood, so sweetly undisguised? No, I will not. You can easily guess how dreadful the idea must have been to me, that I had been the means of forcing you into a situation where you were tempted to deceive both me and yourself. That I had not only made you unhappy, but exposed you to all the danger to be dreaded from the plausible sophistry of an insidious destroyer, aided by your own disappointed affections. But I will not cloud this happy day by recalling such dreadful ideas, such, to me, most just, but agonizing retribution.'

The day, however, could not long remain unclouded. As the hour drew nearer at which they must separate, Catharine became every instant more sad, and Dunallan also seemed overpowered; but it was absolutely necessary he should proceed to London, and he had left himself so little time, that it was now impossible Catharine could accompany him. At last they turned into a road from whence were seen, within a short distance, Edinburgh and its surrounding hills.

'You will not forget to think of me, then, at those hours we have agreed upon, my Catharine?' said Dunallan.

'Forget, Dunallan!' she burst into tears.

Dunallan struggled to overcome his own softness. 'We shall, I trust, my love, meet again in less than a fortnight. We know in whom we trust. When we feel the loneliness and emptiness



of heart which separation brings, let us remember He is present with us both. This thought will unite us at least in soul.' Dunallan continued attempting to support Catharine's drooping spirits, until at last they entered the town, and almost the next minute the square in which Mrs Melville resided.

'My Catharine, may God bless and be ever near you.'

Catharine clasped his hand in both of hers. 'You will remember your promise, Dunallan; you will seek no explanation; you will not see that wicked St Clair.'

'I will not, my love, seek to meet him. I do not wish to see him. I need no explanation. You will write very soon, my Catharine, very frequently.'

'Oh yes; and you too, Dunallan.'

The carriage stopt.

'God bless you, my beloved Catharine. Farewell.'

'Farewell, my dear Dunallan.'

The door of Mrs Melville's house was open, and she herself stood on the steps. Dunallan handed, or rather lifted Catharine out.

'Catharine must make my excuse to you, my dear Mrs Melville,' said he; and again pressing Catharine's hand in his, he hurried into the carriage, and was soon out of sight.

Catharine's heart sunk. She suffered Mrs Melville to lead her into the house, but her thoughts still followed Dunallan.

Elizabeth looked in her expressive countenance and said, smiling, 'Poor friendship! how it must yield to mighty —, what shall I call it, Catharine?'

Catharine threw her arms around her friend. 'What you please, my own Elizabeth; veneration, esteem!'

'But not love,' whispered Elizabeth.

'Are you jealous, my Elizabeth?'

'No, my dear Catharine; I wish from my soul your present feelings may increase. I believe Mr Dunallan deserves the warmest affection you can bestow.'

'He does indeed, Elizabeth. I have discovered this, after yielding to every prejudice against him till it was no longer possible. You, Elizabeth, were always more just.'

Sad recollections soon began to crowd on Catharine's memory.



She had not before seen Elizabeth since her father's death ; and all its mournful circumstances, with the remembrance of his affection for her friend, formed the subject of a long and interesting conversation. Mr Melville was on that day engaged out, for which he had requested his wife to apologize to Catharine, saying at the same time, that he believed he would not be regretted, but only saved the pain of finding himself an intruder even with his wife. Catharine felt relieved on hearing she should see only Elizabeth for some hours.

‘I have much to learn from you, dearest Catharine,’ said Elizabeth, after she had made every inquiry respecting the last moments of her beloved uncle, and wept with Catharine over the mournful account. ‘When I left you last, Catharine, I was afraid of saying a word when you and Mr Dunallan were both present, lest I should annoy either of you, and somehow you never were asunder : yet both so much on the alarm : Mr Dunallan so cold and formally polite in his manner, while his expressive, and then melancholy countenance, told the real state of his feelings ; and you, Catharine, so gentle, so submissive, so lowly in your manner to him, so anxious to oblige ; in short, so completely the reverse of what you had been when I had formerly seen you together. Then every turn of your countenance expressed the most marked dislike, or even scorn.’

‘Oh, Elizabeth, how foolish was I then ! how blind ! Had you only seen my heart on the evening of that dreaded day on which we parted,—my marriage day. I dare say no human being's feelings were ever so suddenly, so completely changed. On that evening, when I saw him received by his own family with such unbounded joy ; when I saw how he was loved by all of them ; when he read and prayed so impressively ! Oh ! I shall never forget my feelings then.’

‘And now, Catharine, you have come on the very subject I wish most particularly to converse with you upon,’ said Elizabeth, drawing her chair, and putting her face closer to Catharine's. ‘I did not wish to lead your mind to any thing so gloomy when I last saw you ; but have you really, my dear friend, adopted Mr Dunallan's religious opinions ?’

‘I have to ask you too, Elizabeth,’ replied Catharine smiling,



‘why you have so studiously avoided answering those parts of my letters in which I attempted to lead you into this subject?’

‘Because,’ replied Elizabeth, ‘I confess it grieved me to see that your mind had been so soon, so easily perverted; yet you know I do not like to write such strong and plain things. I determined never to enter on the subject with you on paper, because I know there is great pleasure in discovering arguments in favour of opinions held by those we love. I trusted a little to the influence I might have in conversation, when I could see your feelings, but not in the least to any I should have by writing.’

‘Well, Elizabeth, I am ready to meet you in conversation, though I do not think your excuse a very good one, for neglecting what I assure you cost me a great deal of trouble and thought to write, just because I feared you might disagree with me.’

‘And I certainly do, my dear Catharine. Could any one have a greater contempt for those opinions than you yourself had, my dearest friend, before you so completely changed your feelings towards Mr Dunallan?’

‘Because, my Elizabeth, I condemned them in perfect ignorance of what they were. I allow your inference, however. It certainly was my esteem for Mr Dunallan that first led me to think more favourably of his opinions. But I have now learnt that those opinions must be loved for their own sakes, or they are of no value, and have no influence on those who adopt them. But what, my Elizabeth, is so disliked by you in my religious sentiments?’

‘For one thing, dear Catharine, those who adopt them become so ridiculously singular. I shall just give you an instance. I was at a party last Saturday evening, where there were many young people, and amongst them one young man of rank, who, I was informed, was a saint. I at the same time was told he was very stupid. His countenance, I thought, however, was both pleasing and intelligent; and I felt inclined to judge favourably of him. I happened to be near him in a crowded part of the room, when, by appealing to his watch, at which he had been stealing several looks before, he discovered that it was



twelve o'clock. He immediately took leave of the party with whom he had been, and who, notwithstanding his stupidity and saintship, I must allow, seemed very anxious to detain him. "Pray, my Lord, do not go yet," was echoed from the whole party; and the mother of two of the young ladies said in her most winning voice and manner, that he really must oblige her by remaining half an hour longer, unless he had some other and more agreeable engagement. He became very confused, and blushing up to the ears, stammered out, "I find that it is now Sunday morning, Madam. I do not think I am properly employed for that day, and must therefore entreat you to excuse me."

'Good young man!' exclaimed Catharine, her eyes glistening.

'My dear Catharine, is it possible you can admire such a parade of religion?'

'I do not admire parade, Elizabeth; and I think it would have been better, perhaps, had your young saint left the party sooner, and avoided this explanation. Yet I think that what you regard as parade, was probably a species of martyrdom to him, which he forced himself to undergo rather than shrink from avowing his principles, rather than deny what master he served.'

'Oh, Catharine, how can you defend such absurdity? What harm could there have been in conversing another half hour even on Sunday?'

'I think I can discover harm in having such late parties on Saturday night, my dear Elizabeth; and therefore equal harm in attending them. You are kept late up yourself, and consequently must be late next morning, perhaps too late to go to church in the early part of the day. Your servants must be late; besides that they at least must break the plain commandments of Heaven, for they must necessarily do a great deal of work on Sunday which they ought not to be obliged to do; and indeed, I think the spirit of the commandment at least is broken through also; for can any one return from a gay party late on Saturday, or rather early on Sunday, in a right state of mind for keeping the sacred day holy? I am sure I could not.'

'But this is the very thing, Catharine. You get such gloomy



dismal notions about every thing. Sunday was surely intended for a day of rest and happiness, not of melancholy deprivations. I should like to know how you spent your Sunday at Arnmore. I suppose Mrs Oswald would insist on every thing going on exactly as when Mr Dunallan was at home.'

'At least I did,' replied Catharine, smiling; 'for Mrs Oswald would take the lead in nothing.'

'You, my Catharine! you would be sadly at a loss.'

'Mrs Oswald willingly assisted me, and told me exactly what had been Mr Dunallan's wishes and her own.'

'Well, dear Catharine!'

'Well, Elizabeth, I dare say you will think we were very gloomy. Our hours at Arnmore are always early. On Sunday we were called half an hour earlier than usual, because the parish church is rather distant. We met on that day at eight o'clock to prayers. The servants were ordered to have every thing done on Saturday, to prevent any unnecessary work on Sunday; and all were ordered to assemble, ready dressed for church, when we met at prayers. This served two purposes; it prevented much time being spent in dressing, and any improper finery, at least in some degree. After prayers and breakfast, it was time for the servants who walked to set out for church, which they every one did except an old woman, who could not walk so far; and those few servants who were absolutely necessary, returned home after the morning church, and this they did by turns. Mrs Oswald, the children, and I, and sometimes the old woman I mentioned, when she was able, went in the carriage. Dr Angus, our clergyman, is a most excellent man, so that going to hear him preach was a source of real pleasure and improvement to me. All the servants sat near us in church, and I used to be greatly pleased with their attentive, and even devout appearance; but, indeed, Dunallan had taken so much pains with them, they must have been very insensible had they not at least wished for information. When church was over, every one returned home. No servant was allowed to visit on Sunday. It had been Mr Dunallan's custom to assemble the men servants in the evening, to instruct and converse with them. In his absence, they of themselves requested the steward to read to them, which



he did. He is an excellent and sensible man. Mrs Oswald and I divided the female servants. She took the elder ones, while I assembled the young ones in my apartment; and I have found the greatest satisfaction in doing this. We afterwards again assembled to prayers, and thus finished the day.'

Elizabeth sighed, and continued thoughtful for a few moments.

'Now tell me, Elizabeth,' said Catharine, 'how you spend Sunday, since you have been mistress of a family?'

'You will think us sad heathens,' replied Elizabeth.

'Let me hear,' said Catharine, smiling.

'Well we are always late on that morning, poor Philip has so much to say to me. We sometimes go to church in the morning, and always in the evening. As to my servants, I really do not know what becomes of them. They go out by turns, which they settle among themselves, I believe; and they have a general order to be home by nine o'clock; but as I spend Sunday generally with my mother, I really know very little about them. At my mother's, we sometimes read a sermon in the evening. She always wishes us to do so, but is so anxious to see us amused and happy, she does not always urge it.'

Catharine took Elizabeth's hand in hers; 'My own Elizabeth, can you think this fulfils the law, to keep the Sabbath day holy?'

'Our conversation is very innocent, Catharine.'

'But, Elizabeth, does Heaven permit it ever to be otherwise on any day? That cannot fulfil the commandment respecting this one.'

'But we are all so happy to meet at my mother's, and have so much to talk about, I cannot think Heaven frowns on our affectionate and happy circle.'

'But why not meet on other days?'

'That is impossible. Philip is so immersed in business now, he has not a day to give to any one during the session, excepting some of those days on which he must give or go to professional kind of dinners.'

'But, Elizabeth, what day has he to prepare for eternity?'

Elizabeth sighed; 'Our whole lives, Catharine, must be that preparation day.'

'True. But if we have a day mercifully set apart for that



momentous work, my Elizabeth, ought we to pass it away in other occupations? Is not some knowledge of the truths of religion necessary? I believe that Mr Melville's profession is calculated highly to benefit his fellow-men; but love to man is only one part of the law of God, you know, my Elizabeth, and the second part. The first is love to God; and can we love Him without making ourselves acquainted with his character?'

Elizabeth was silent for a moment. 'I believe you are right, Catharine. *We* spend too little time and thought on those subjects, and *you* perhaps too much; but tell me truly, is Mr Dunallan a cheerful man, or is he not rather melancholy and grave from his religion?'

'I appeal to yourself, Elizabeth, whether he is not at least singularly agreeable in society,' asked Catharine.

'Extremely so,' replied Elizabeth. 'I never saw any man with equal powers of conversation, or with more apparent sweetness of temper, and warmth of feeling; yet when I have seen him, though he has nothing gloomy in his manners, he has something unusually grave.'

'But when you have seen him, he has always been in rather painful circumstances. However, I would not characterize Dunallan as exactly a very cheerful man, though he has the power of stealing away one's sadness more than any person I ever knew. The reason of this I believe is, that he guesses the cause, and finds means to do that away. But you are mistaken in supposing the grave and thoughtful cast of his character has been produced by religion. I believe it to be his natural disposition, and that religion has, on the contrary, given a new motive and charm to his existence. Since I have been with him, I have learnt his hours of solitude and study of sacred things; and when I have met him after those times, I cannot describe to you the heavenly calmness of his countenance and manner, or the sweet, feeling, animated liveliness of his conversation. Ah, my Elizabeth, can the study of the divine character and perfections fail to improve every power of the mind, and every feeling of the heart? Can communion with God fail to leave a peace in the soul, which rejoices the whole internal being, and inspires the most perfect benevolence to all around;



and to those most dearly loved, a warmth, and purity, and ardour of affection? Ah, how pleasing! how inexpressibly valuable!’

‘My own Catharine,’ said Elizabeth, ‘what an enthusiast you are become! I feel, too, that you would soon infect me, though I scarcely know what you mean. But there is Melville’s ring at the door.’ Elizabeth started up, and flew to meet him. ‘I shall tell him you are come, Catharine.’

Catharine was not quite so much delighted with the interruption as Elizabeth was. She could still have talked for hours of Dunallan. Even Elizabeth’s husband could scarcely, at this moment, excite her interest. Elizabeth returned into the room with him, her countenance betraying her anxiety that he and Catharine should confirm all she had said of both. Melville’s appearance was very pleasing, and conveyed an impression of much talent, from the fire of his dark eyes, and the lively cast of his whole countenance. His tall and slight figure, and animated gestures when he spoke, rather added to this. Catharine was extremely pleased with his appearance and manner. He also seemed to find her as amiable as Elizabeth had described her to be. Elizabeth’s countenance beamed with pleasure; but, as the conversation became more general, Catharine’s sadness returned. Her thoughts continually followed Dunallan, travelling in solitude; and she felt happy when the hour arrived to separate for the night.

Elizabeth, however, followed her to her apartment. Catharine looked smilingly in her face. ‘Now, Elizabeth, you want to know what I think of Mr Melville.’

‘Well Catharine, what *do* you think of him?’

‘I think he is almost as handsome as Mr Dunallan.’

‘*Almost!* Well that is a great deal from you. And his manners, are they *almost* as pleasing?’

‘His manners are so different, I cannot compare them; but I think Mr Melville very agreeable indeed.’

‘Well, I am satisfied,’ replied Elizabeth. ‘I see Philip is charmed with you. Good night. I must not keep you up after the fatigues of to-day.’

Catharine, when left alone, recalled all that had that day



passed between herself and Dunallan. The certainty of his love for her was peace and delight to her heart. She now deeply regretted having *had* any reserves with him; but for these she might now have been saved that anxiety which she could not overcome, whenever the thought occurred of the possibility of his meeting St Clair, and of any explanation taking place between them. She trembled at this idea; for she was convinced that St Clair would rather seek than avoid any cause of quarrel.

In this state of uneasiness she had but one resource,—to cast all her cares on her Almighty Protector; and, in doing so, she found the truest support and consolation. She also found the truth of what Dunallan had said, ‘That the remembrance of the presence of that Almighty Guardian with both, united them at least in soul.’ At that hour Dunallan had promised to meet her in spirit, at the throne of mercy and love. The thought was soothing and delightful; it hallowed while it increased her affection for him; and her anxiety yielded to hope and trust. After thus committing herself to the care of Heaven, Catharine began to revolve in her own mind the most proper means to use, in order to obtain an explanation respecting her letters, and also to overcome St Clair’s hatred of Dunallan, and desire of injuring him. She had not forgotten the example of Dunallan’s mother, in leaving whatever she could have no power over in the hands of Heaven, in humble hope and trust; but in this case she felt certain of possessing some influence, and she could not be satisfied while she left untried any attempt to secure the safety of Dunallan. She recollected St Clair from his boyish days, and in every scene, every circumstance which her memory recalled, while petulant, violent, and contemptuous to every one else, to her he had ever been gentle, feeling, and even delicate. A feeling of pity followed these recollections, and an earnest desire to see him restored to the path of rectitude at least. When she remembered his even fastidious sense of honour; his abhorrence of every thing low or mean; his family pride; his haughtiness of character, she could scarcely believe herself right in her suspicions; but no one else, amongst those she had formerly known was capable of such deep-laid schemes to make



Dunallan wretched; neither could any being on earth, she believed, succeed so perfectly, from his power of imitating her writing. She at last determined to write herself to St Clair, and to make Mrs Oswald acquainted with her having done so. She hoped much from this, though, after writing her letter several times over, she was still dissatisfied with its contents.

‘To A. ST CLAIR, Esq.

‘You will be surprised to see a letter from me, Mr St Clair; perhaps you will not be so much surprised to be told, that you have it in your power to add very much to my happiness, or, if you refuse a request I wish to make, to lessen that happiness very materially. I feel extreme reluctance, however, to make this request, not because I feel unwilling to be under an obligation to you, but because I shrink from entering on the subject regarding which I wish to make this request. I shrink from putting into words what I am too certain I am right in believing to be true; but I think you must understand me. I only wish to entreat you to put it into my power to convince the person to whom I am united for ever, that I am not unworthy of his confidence. In doing this no explanation, no mortifying confession is asked. *I* at least will consider myself obliged. I only wish the return of those letters which expressed the real feelings of my heart to that person to whom they are addressed. I am confident that I plead for your own happiness, Mr St Clair, when I ask you to do this. I think I may also appeal to yourself whether I ever, in the slightest degree, gave you cause for your present desire to make me unhappy. You knew my father’s plan to unite me to Mr Dunallan almost as soon as I knew it myself—you knew my promise, and my determination to fulfil his wishes, whatever it should cost me. Have you not (indirectly at least) praised my filial devotion, as you called it? And yet you wish to render me unhappy and despised, because I persevered in doing what you yourself approved! You wish to subject me to the most painful and degrading of all suspicions! You wish me to live oppressed with the feeling that I must appear deserving of those suspicions! Can it be possible that this kind of power over my happiness can give you any pleasure?



Can you recollect how you have obtained it, and not long for the power to free yourself from it? I think I know you sufficiently to be certain, that you will never enjoy a moment's peace or satisfaction of mind while you are conscious yourself of this taint upon your honour, were you even perfectly convinced the world would never know it. You also know me sufficiently, Mr St Clair, to be certain that I wish not intentionally to mislead you in the slightest degree. I think you under the influence of a very powerful passion: but not of that passion which finds an excuse in almost every heart, but of one which finds pity or excuse nowhere,—you hate Mr Dunallan. I take the privilege of an old friend, and entreat you to forgive me, and for your own sake ask yourself whether I am wrong? I entreat you to call to your aid those nobler and more generous feelings which, for a time, you have banished, and attempt to overcome this degrading and dangerous passion—degrading to you, and dangerous (I cannot help dreading) to him against whom you indulge it. I do not conceal from you my dread of his danger; for, by thus throwing myself on your humanity, I feel as if I chained up your very thoughts from injuring him.

‘I shall ask Mrs Oswald to forward this to you, as I am ignorant of your address, and think she will discover it more easily than I can, and because I wish her to know what I have written to you, since I must conceal it from Mr Dunallan.

‘C. DUNALLAN.’

After finishing this letter, Catharine retired to dream over the occurrences of the day.

---

## CHAPTER XIX.

CATHARINE next morning rose at her usual early hour, and again renewed her entreaties to Heaven for every blessing on Dunallan, and for improvement to herself. She had been reading for some time with composure and attention, and her heart raised to Heaven for guidance, when she was interrupted



by some one tapping gently at her door. She went to open it.

‘My dearest Catharine!’ exclaimed the happy voice of Helen Graham, who rushed into the room, and clasped Catharine to her bosom.

‘My dear Helen!’

‘My beloved Catharine! Mrs Melville would not allow us to come here last night. She said we would only disturb you, and she must have you all to herself for one evening; but Rose and I determined to come very early this morning.’

Rose Lennox now threw her gentle arms also round Catharine.

‘Rose! my dear Rose! This is an unexpected pleasure.’

‘My dearest Catharine, how I have longed to see you.’

‘My sweet Rose! My dear kind Helen!’ said Catharine, kissing first the one and then the other. She then seated herself between them, an arm round each, and looked smilingly at them. ‘Helen, you look more blooming than ever. I see you can live without me.’

‘Oh! indeed Catharine, I have never ceased thinking of you, and forming plans how I should see you again, since we parted.’

‘And you, Rose,’ said Catharine, turning to her, ‘I think your cheek may still be compared to the blush rose, and your forehead to the lily of the valley, as your old admirer Mr Lovat used to say.’

‘My dearest Catharine,’ replied Rose, ‘we may return all your compliments a thousand-fold. How different are your looks from what they were the last morning I saw you! You were then like a marble statue, so still, and pale, and sad.’

‘All is different here too, Rose,’ said Catharine, putting her hand on her heart. ‘I now look back to that morning as the time in which I secured my greatest happiness.’

‘Thank Heaven, dearest Catharine!’ exclaimed Rose emphatically.

‘Yes, my dear Rose, I do thank Heaven; Mr Dunallan has taught me to be like you, Rose; to desire to regard all events as overruled by Heaven for the wisest and kindest purposes.’

‘Like me!’ repeated Rose, sighing, ‘How can you thus reproach me, Catharine?’



‘Reproach you, Rose! I mean all I say.’

‘Oh! you are mistaken, then, sadly mistaken. But we have interrupted you Catharine,’ observing her Bible lying open.

‘No, my dear Rose, I shall not be interrupted; we shall finish what I was reading. I know you will like it; and Helen, I am sure, is too early to have read any to herself.’ Catharine then pressed her two young friends more closely to her, and read in a feeling manner a short passage of Scripture.

‘Thank you, dear Catharine,’ said Rose, when she stopped. ‘How beautiful is that passage!’

‘Beautiful indeed!’ replied Catharine, ‘What do you think, Helen?’

‘Really, I do not understand it.’

‘Because it can only be understood by the heart, my Helen, and yours is strangely shut against all religious feeling. Do you still prefer Shakespeare to the Bible, Helen? as you once avowed to me you did.’

‘And if I do, Catharine, I cannot change my natural taste, though I may conceal it.’

‘No, no, my dear, do not conceal it. Your frankness on every subject is your greatest virtue; but it is very unaccountable that you, who are so uncommonly alive to all that is beautiful in creation, and in human character, and in poetry, and every work of man, should be so dead to the beauty and sublimity of the Scriptures; and that you should feel so deeply the kindness of those who love you, and be so cold and ungrateful to the greatest love.’

Helen reddened and remained silent.

‘Forgive me, dear Helen,’ said Catharine, kissing her cheek; ‘I did not mean to offend; I am too plain in what I say; but indeed I should feel very little affection for you, if I did not regret this indifference on your part to your own happiness.’

Helen’s eyes filled with tears. ‘You cannot offend me, Catharine, whatever you say.’

‘I will say no more now, dear Helen; but if you knew how I sometimes reproach myself for not having used the influence your affection for me gave me over you, to induce you to think



and read more on that subject, you would not be displeased with me ; but I hear Elizabeth's voice : let us join her.'

Elizabeth was coming slowly up stairs. 'So young ladies, this is the way you obey my matronly instructions ; you have disturbed my poor fatigued Catharine before she could have been half rested.'

'We found her up, and reading, my dear Mrs Melville,' said Rose.

When seated at breakfast, the little party soon became so gay that Catharine's spirits began to sink. She, however, made an effort to join in a cheerfulness which had been chiefly produced by pleasure at again meeting her, and which she felt would be checked by her grave looks.

Helen's usual bashfulness completely gave way to the extreme gaiety of her spirits ; and Elizabeth, seated opposite to Melville, and next to Catharine, seemed to feel so perfectly happy, that she joined and promoted Helen's mirth ; while Melville, with scarcely a smile on his own countenance, was so excessively amusing, and really witty, that even Rose could not resist his powers, and was as gay almost as Helen. Every time Catharine laughed, however, she felt still more depressed. The late scenes she had witnessed ; her dying father ; Dunallan perhaps in danger, mingled so ill with the lightness of heart of those around her, that she in vain attempted to join in the general cheerfulness ; till at last Melville seemed to observe that her smiles were completely forced, and immediately gave a graver turn to the conversation.

'Miss Lennox,' said he, 'may I ask what is become of the poor family you were going to visit when I met you two days ago ? Did you find their dwelling ?'

'Yes, we did,' replied Rose ; 'and you never saw so wretched a place. Had mamma known that Miss Morven intended taking me to such a place, I am sure she would have objected to my going even with her.'

'Indeed,' replied Melville, 'I was so surprised at meeting you where I did, that I completely forgot the impertinence of my question, when I asked you with so little ceremony where you could be going. I hope you and your friend forgave me.'



‘Oh quite, we were not at all surprised at the question. I was glad, however, that I went ; for I should never have believed that such wretchedness existed, had I not seen it ; though Miss Morven tells me she knows of cases still more miserable than that I witnessed.’

‘Where did you find this wretched family, Rose?’ asked Catharine. ‘Can any one assist you in comforting them?’

‘Yes, my dear Catharine, though I cannot tell you where we found them. Miss Morven took me through so many little lanes and by-ways, I was surprised at her remembering them ; and then we mounted up a wooden staircase, almost perpendicular, and some of the steps broken. I was almost afraid, and asked Miss Morven if it was not dangerous to trust ourselves upon them. She desired me to follow her without fear, and I should see the kind of beings who were obliged constantly to ascend and descend this unsafe ladder, as I thought it. When we had reached the top of it, Miss Morven, who is tall, could not stand upright ; and it was so dark we had to feel our way to a door, through the crevices of which we saw the light ; and within which we heard a low moaning voice of one who seemed to be reading. “We must not interrupt that voice,” said Miss Morven to me in a whisper ; “I think it is some one praying.” We stopped for a few minutes, and easily heard, through the thin door, all that passed within. Miss Morven was right ; the voice was that of a person praying ; and I was greatly struck with the beauty and tenderness of his ideas, pronounced, to be sure, in the broadest accent. At last, the voice stopped, and Miss Morven softly opened the door, and stooped to enter. It was a small garret-room, with a little skylight, just sufficient to show its wretchedness. At one corner there was a miserable bed, without curtains, on which sat, supported by a large bundle of something, for it was not even pillows, a young woman, very pale and thin, but with a sweet and placid countenance. Close by the fire sat an old woman, almost bent together, and trembling from palsy. There were several other people in the miserable little room, upon whom the light, when we entered, shone so dimly, that I scarcely perceived them. After being a little accustomed to the darkness, however, I discovered, in another



corner, under the sloping ceiling, a little bed of straw, on which lay a child, so emaciated, I had no idea life could have remained in such a form. Bending over this poor innocent was another woman, whose face was almost concealed by a large shade drawn over her eyes. A man, who had stepped aside on our entrance, and who was the person we had heard praying, soon after left the room. Miss Morven addressed the woman in bed, in the most gentle and compassionate tone of voice, telling her she had been informed of the distressed situation of her family, and she had come to see if she could be of any use to them. The woman's countenance brightened.

“You are very kind, Madam. We have indeed been in great distress, but God has not forsaken us. He has made our strength sufficient for the burden He has seen fit to lay upon us. We have had reason to say, his promises never fail, and that it has been good for us to be afflicted.”

‘Miss Morven expressed her pleasure at finding so much resignation and thankfulness in the midst of such sufferings.

‘The young woman then told us that the infirm old woman was her mother, and that till within the last year she and her sister had been able to support her. The old woman here interrupted her daughter, to tell us that this good child had left an excellent situation in the country, where she had been a servant, to come and take care of her. The mother wept as she spoke, and finished by saying, that it gave her a sore heart indeed to see her Mary laid there; but she hoped she would be kept from repining, and might never forget the precious words, “That whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” The daughter then told us, that about eight months ago her mother took a fever, which lasted so long, and during which she required such constant attendance, that the daughter had to sit up part of the night to get the work done necessary for their subsistence; and that even with that exertion, she was often unable to procure the many little comforts her mother's situation required. She had, therefore, been obliged to sell their little articles of dress and furniture, one after another, until they were reduced to their present state of want. Mary had hoped that, on the recovery of her mother, she would be able, by continuing her ex-



ertions, to support her, and replace some of their things ; but before her mother could leave her bed, poor Mary was herself seized with a low fever, which reduced her to extreme weakness, and during which, she had caught a cold that had since settled on her lungs, and from which, she added with perfect composure, the doctor had told her she could never recover. The woman who sat by the sick child was Mary's sister ; her husband was abroad ; but they knew not whether he was alive or dead, for they had not heard from him for two years. The poor woman bent closer over her child when her sister told us this, but said nothing.

“ “ She brought her little boy here,” continued Mary, “ when I was taken ill, that she might nurse us both. She worked hard in the day, and by fire-light at night, to support us, till she is now nearly blind ; and since she is no longer able, the Lord has sent you, Madam, to help us. At this moment there is not a farthing nor a morsel in the house ; and my sister's two other children will be coming in directly from school, hungry enough poor things. We have had one great mercy mingled in our cup of affliction. We have got them admitted into a charity school, where they learn their education, and the fear of God.”

“ At this moment the children came in ; two neatly, though poorly clothed little girls, with sickly looks. Miss Morven spoke to them so sweetly and kindly, that they replied to her without any fear or shyness. The youngest of the two, however, soon stepped to her mother, and whispered something into her ear. The mother shook her head, and the poor child stood beside her for a moment in silence,—then the tears began to trickle down her little pale cheeks, and fall on her mother's shoulder. The poor mother took the child's hand kindly in hers, and drawing its little head down on her breast gently stroked it, while she seemed to whisper comfort into her ear. I went to them, and asked what was the matter with the poor little thing.

“ “ Oh she will soon be better, Miss,” said the mother. “ Come Jessy, say that pretty hymn about the patient child, to the young lady.” The little thing instantly looked up, and began to obey, but her heart was full, and she could not speak.



‘ “ You shall first tell me what is the matter,” said I, drawing her away to a little distance.

‘ “ I am only hungry,” said the poor innocent, in such a little melancholy voice, “ but mother had nothing to give us before we went to the morning-school,” and her tears redoubled.’

‘ Do not tell us any more, for Heaven’s sake, Rose,’ exclaimed Helen, attempting in vain to suppress her own tears, ‘ there is nothing half so heart-breaking as the distress of children, poor helpless things!’

‘ Wait till I have finished my account of the inhabitants of this house before you say so,’ replied Rose, ‘ unless you are tired of my story,’ looking around.

‘ Oh no, oh no!’

‘ My dear Rose,’ said Catharine, ‘ you teach us how sinful and unthankful we are in repining at our trifling misfortunes. To think of an absent husband, of whose fate one is uncertain. A child dying before our eyes, and another silently weeping from hunger!—Oh! we ought to know there are such sufferings in the world. But go on, my dear Rose.’

‘ I assure you,’ continued Rose, ‘ that though I was very much affected by seeing this family, yet the impression they left on me was rather pleasing. The heavenly composure of the sick sister; the gentle quietness of the other; and the thankfulness with which our little assistance inspired them; the care with which they reared up the little girls, who (after Miss Morven had sent for some food, during which time we visited another family on the same floor), repeated an amazing number of hymns and chapters of the Bible, and answered Miss Morven’s questions to discover if they understood what they said, in a way that surprised us all. This, in some degree, reconciled me to the distress of their situation, for it proved to me the power of religion to give comfort in the most calamitous circumstances. When we left them, they seemed even happy, and so grateful to heaven, and certain that whatever they suffered in this life was only intended to prepare them for a better. How different the other family was! Before we entered their wretched abode we heard the horrid sounds of scolding, and a child screaming. Miss Morven opened the door without being observed, so great



was the confusion within. A woman, squalid and dirty, held a miserable child by the arm, occasionally shaking him violently.'

' "I'll learn ye, ye handless little devil—ye'll ken how to break every thing ye touch—what ha'e ye done wi' the bottle?"

' "I couldna' help it, mother," screamed the child.

' "Gi'e him't weel," cried a man who lay stretched out in his clothes on a miserable filthy bed; "I'll help ye if ye canna."

' "Ye'll help me! ye had better help me to some meat for his stomach, lying up there for half the day when naething ails ye."

' "As weel lying here as working for you to drink, ye usefu' wife," replied the man carelessly.

' She turned to retort with a face of fury, but discovering us, it smoothed in a moment. Miss Morven asked if her name was—something, I forget what, and if she had a sick husband.

' "Oh ay, Ma'am, I'm just the woman, and my gudeman's sick very often—he is lying there at this minute sae badly he canna stir, and he has had nae work for a fortnight. I'm sure I dinna ken what we'll do," and she began to whimper, "Johnny, my man, ye maun be going to the schule,—we would want ony thing sooner, Ma'am, than no gie him schuling."

' "Are you fond of school, Johnny?" said Miss Morven gently to the child; but the boy, conscious of his present safety, called out as loud as he could, "I ne'er was at ony schule," and then looking triumphantly at his mother, ran out of the room. "He is sad a laddy," said his mother, quite unconcerned, "he thinks naething o' telling lees by the minute."

' "That is sad indeed," replied Miss Morven, "but I think a little attention on your part might cure so young a child of any habit; and if you allow this one to strengthen, it may not only hurt his future prospects in this world, but may also shut him out from that place where we are told 'no liars shall enter.'"

' "Oh ay, Ma'am, its very true, and I'm sure to please you, I would take ony pains, or do ony thing."

' "To please me!" repeated Miss Morven indignantly; "would you not make this exertion for your child's sake, or for your own? As a mother you are accountable for the faults of so young a child."



“It’s very true, Ma’am.”

“Do you go yourself, and take your child, to church?” asked Miss Morven.

“Sometimes, Ma’am; and if I had a gown, and Johnny had a hat and shoes, I would like very weel to gang.”

Miss Morven tried to convince her of the duty of going to a place of worship, to seek instruction for her soul, which would live for ever, although she could not make her person so fine as she wished; but she seemed dead to every thing that did not give some immediate prospect of worldly advantage. During this conversation I looked round the room. It was larger and better than that we had seen the other poor family in; and there was no want of furniture, though it was covered with filth,—indeed the whole room was offensive in every way. The woman observed my eyes wandering round her dwelling, and slipping her hand behind her, she drew a dirty cloth over a piece of raw meat which had been flung on the large chest on which she sat. Miss Morven saw this, and looking at me significantly, said in French, she did not believe the woman was in want, and soon after we took our leave. The woman followed us, expecting something, but Miss Morven gave her nothing. I felt ashamed, and gave her a trifle, for which the woman, with an impudent nod of her vile head, wished me a handsome husband, and Miss Morven laughed at my reward, which she said I deserved for my false shame. We found afterwards that this was not the woman Miss Morven had wished to visit, and that the husband was so good a workman he could make very high wages whenever he chose, and they have but one child to support. Yet surely, Helen,’ said Rose, ‘they were much more miserable than the poor family who could look to Heaven for comfort.’

Helen agreed, and Mr Melville, telling Rose that her stories must have kept a client of his waiting for the last hour, took his leave, after very particularly asking the address of the poor family, in whose fate Rose had interested every one.

‘Who is this Miss Morven, Rose?’ asked Catharine.

‘She is the daughter of a Sir William Morven, who died abroad some years ago. She has seen a great deal of the world, and is extremely agreeable and well informed. She is much



liked, and every one wishes to be acquainted with her. She has two sisters younger than herself, to whom she acts the part of a mother, though she is still a young and handsome woman. She is very benevolent, and spends her time and fortune in doing good. She is also remarkably accomplished, though she sets little value on common accomplishments, and is courted by every body; so mamma has no objection to my being as much with her as I choose, though her opinions on religious subjects are just those mamma is so afraid I shall adopt.'

'I am sure I should like Miss Morven,' said Catharine.

'Well,' replied Rose, her eyes brightening with pleasure, 'I know Miss Morven wishes much to be acquainted with you, and mamma is to be here by and by, to request you to meet her at a little party we are to have this evening.'

'I shall have great pleasure in doing so, my dear Rose. You must also take me to see your poor family.'

Mrs Lennox arrived early in the forenoon.

'My dear Lady Dunallan!' exclaimed she on entering, 'how rejoiced I am to see you. O how charmingly you look!'

Catharine had not before been addressed by her new title, and the paleness which followed, on her father being thus recalled to her memory, showed Mrs Lennox that she had touched on wounds too recently healed to be approached by her. She immediately flew to twenty subjects quite uninteresting to Catharine, and at last finished by entreating her to meet Miss Morven, the most charming, or rather, next to Lady Dunallan, the most charming woman she ever knew. Catharine immediately promised to comply with her wish, and Mrs Lennox soon after took leave.

The evening was far advanced, when Catharine, who had been deeply interested in conversation with Elizabeth and Helen, recollected her engagement to Mrs Lennox. 'Elizabeth?' exclaimed she, 'what shall we do? we have forgotten our engagement to Mrs Lennox.'

'We are not too late,' replied Elizabeth, 'it cannot be nine o'clock.'

'Nine o'clock! you at least must dress; I shall make little change, but we shall not be there till near ten.'



‘That is soon enough,’ replied Elizabeth, smiling. ‘What country ideas you have, my Catharine!’

‘But you know, Elizabeth, if there is to be a large party at Mrs Lennox’s, which these late hours seem to threaten, I cannot, I ought not to go.’

‘Mrs Lennox assured me she was to have only a few friends you know,’ said Elizabeth; ‘she certainly would not have expected to see either of us at a large party.’

When Catharine and her friends arrived at Mrs Lennox’s house, however, they perceived, by the numerous carriages and chairs which blockaded the door, that the party could not be small. Catharine wished to return, but Elizabeth assuring her that she might come away whenever she chose, and reminding her of Mrs Lennox’s aptness to take offence, her better judgment was overruled, and she allowed Mr Melville to hand her from the carriage, and after hearing ‘Lady Dunallan’ announced, she entered a room full of people. Those who had been within hearing of her name had their eyes eagerly bent towards her. Catharine felt abashed, and would have shrunk from the general gaze, but Mrs Lennox immediately approached,—

‘My dear Lady Dunallan, what pleasure it gives me to see you again in my house,—you whom I have so long regarded almost as a child of my own. Allow me to introduce some friends of mine to you, who have long desired the happiness of your acquaintance.’

‘Mrs Lennox,’ said Catharine in a low but indignant tone of voice, ‘I ought not to have been at such a party as this,’—looking at her deep mourning,—‘you have deceived me. I only expected to have met Miss Morven, and I must request that, during the short time I stay, I may be introduced to no other person whatever.’

Mrs Lennox had drawn Catharine’s arm within hers, and was conducting her to the other end of the room. She looked confounded at her reproach:—‘My dear young friend, your ideas on these subjects are like no one’s else now-a-days. I assure you no creature will think you have violated any form in being here, but your too scrupulous self.’

‘It is not *form* I regard,’ replied Catharine warmly, ‘but this



scene ought to be, and is, a painful contrast to my present feelings. I believe, Mrs Lennox, you do not wish to make me uncomfortable in your house. I shall be extremely so, unless you leave me entirely unnoticed for the half-hour I shall remain.'

'Come in here then,' said Mrs Lennox, much disappointed, and conducting Catharine into a smaller apartment, in which there were only a few people, 'I must account to those friends of mine who wished to be introduced to you, my dear, for my breach of promise; what can I say?'

'Say the truth,' replied Catharine.

Rose was in this apartment, and approached with an expression of confusion on her ingenuous countenance.

'Ah, Rose,' whispered Catharine, 'why did you suffer me to be here?'

'My dear Catharine, I could not prevent it. Mamma has asked most of these people since the morning, just to meet you. I said I was sure you would dislike so large a party, but mamma really did not believe me. But, if you remain in this little room, you will see very few people, only a few card-players.'

Catharine shook her head, and, retiring to a sofa in a corner of the apartment, she told Elizabeth that she would continue there until the time came at which she had ordered her carriage. Her heart was so full, she could scarcely suppress her tears for a few moments.

Elizabeth seated herself on one side of Catharine, and Helen on the other; and Melville, drawing a chair in front of them, said, 'We have only to suppose ourselves at home, and be as comfortable as if we were there.'

'My imagination cannot be so accommodating,' said Helen, 'only look at the party behind you, Mr Melville.'

Melville turned half round. Two very old ladies, and two not much younger gentlemen, were seating themselves at a card table, with looks of much eagerness, though the head of one of the ladies, and also her hands, shook from age, and the other was carefully settling a pair of spectacles on her nose before she began.

'I declare, Colonel,' said the shaking lady, in a mumbling voice, 'I have thought of nothing since I saw you but your



extraordinary run of good fortune the last time we played together.'

The Colonel answered, with a smile of importance, 'I hope, Madam, you do not ascribe my success entirely to good fortune?'

'Oh no, Colonel, your play——: but why, in the name of wonder, did you play a spade now?'

'I played a club, Madam,' replied the Colonel stiffly.

'A club!' The old lady raised the disputed card to her dim eyes, 'I protest it is a club. The lights are surely ill arranged.'

'I am sure a pair of spectacles, in some cases, would save a great deal of time,' said the other lady, rather impatiently.

'We have lost the odd trick by that last admirable card of yours!' exclaimed the Colonel, looking at his poor old partner with suppressed wrath.

'What could I play, Colonel? I have not another of the kind in my whole hand ——.'

'Good heavens! Madam, why do you add to your irreparable mistakes, by also betraying your weakness?'

'I have, however, gained more tricks than you have, Colonel,' retorted the old lady, beginning to get warm.

'We have it!' exclaimed the other lady triumphantly, and snatching up the last trick.—The Colonel darted a look of angry contempt at his fair partner, who now with much difficulty began to deal the cards.

Helen laughed. 'What miserable figures!' exclaimed she.

'Miserable indeed! my dear Helen,' said Catharine; 'but I do not feel inclined to laugh at them.'

'Nor I,' said Melville. 'Human nature in so degraded a state, is always a painful sight to me.'

'But you are both too severe,' said Elizabeth. 'Our amusements must, in some degree, be suited to our age. You would not have people, just because they are old and infirm, give up all intercourse with the world and each other. They can no longer join in the pleasures of the young,—why deprive them of what is now their only means of being amused and happy in society?'

'Happy!' repeated Catharine. 'Look at those four faces, and tell me if you really think they are happy?'



‘Well, perhaps they are not happy in your sense of the word,’ replied Elizabeth; ‘but the passions and feelings which still remain alive in them are excited; and I believe all our happiness consists in some kind of excitement.’

‘And shall we all come to this, my love?’ asked Melville, looking smilingly in his wife’s face.

‘Heaven forbid!’ replied Elizabeth, returning his smile.

‘But what is to prevent us?’ asked Catharine.

‘Now Catharine,’ said Elizabeth, ‘what would you have these old people do all their long evenings?’

‘I must answer you too gravely, Elizabeth, if I say what I really think. But what is the use of education, or religion, or any attempt to regulate the mind and feelings, if we are innocent and safe, just before we reach the end of all our aims, in thus trifling, or worse than trifling, away our few remaining hours of preparation?—But here comes Mrs Lennox; see, she is looking for us as if we were under the chairs. I suppose the lady with her is Miss Morven.’

‘My dear Lady Dunallan!’ exclaimed Mrs Lennox, ‘I thought you had made your escape. Allow me to make you acquainted with Miss Morven.’

Miss Morven and Catharine regarded each other with looks of equal pleasure. Miss Morven’s appearance was extremely prepossessing.

‘Both of my most valued friends are extremely displeased with me this evening,’ resumed Mrs Lennox; ‘My only hope of making my peace is, by being able to prove that it is possible, even at a large, and mixed, and late party, to meet with people whose friendship is very valuable. I shall return soon, in the hope of obtaining your forgiveness,’ continued Mrs Lennox, ‘and in the meantime, I shall farther show my penitence by inviting Miss Weston and her harp into this apartment; but do not be afraid, I shall only give her the hope of being introduced to you on some future evening.’ Mrs Lennox then hurried away.

‘What is your objection to large parties, Miss Morven?’ asked Melville, who had frequently before met with her.

‘Indeed, Mr Melville, it would take me a whole evening to



tell you half of my objections; but before I begin, let me ask you what benefit is to be got at them, or even what pleasure?’

Melville smiled: ‘I do not think I can allow you to escape answering my question by asking one I shall find it so difficult to meet.’

‘Well,’ continued Miss Morven, ‘I shall try to answer you. I think at a party such as this, one sees or hears nothing at all improving either to the mind or heart; vanity and display, and at least only trifling chit-chat; then one’s feelings of ridicule are excited,’ looking round to the card-table, ‘where one should only feel pity; precious time is lost for absolutely nothing, not even amusement; for every one tires of these crowds: then late hours and late rising next day, and if you have any plan of life at all, that plan deranged; and if you enter the vortex, you must do this every evening and every day.’

‘No!’ said Melville, smiling, ‘that is not necessary. You *really* good ladies, are too violently anxious to be right, I think, and see more evil in some things than *really* exists. A man with a profession like myself, must have a plan of life, and must keep regular hours; and yet there is no party at which you do not see many lawyers.’

‘True, Mr Melville, but I believe the plan of life we scrupulous ladies wish to pursue, is not exactly of the same nature as that of a lawyer. It includes, and chiefly consists in, studies and efforts, which are far more affected by such scenes, than the study of law can be.’

‘But then,’ resumed Melville, smiling gaily, ‘what would become of all the poor mammas without these opportunities of showing us their pretty daughters?’

‘Well! there you mention the only case in which I can discover their use; but that arises from a fault in the present state of society, not necessary surely; and which you gentlemen promote, I suppose to protect your own hearts; for I think you all agree in *saying*, at least, that women appear most lovely and most engaging, when most domestic.’

‘Certainly,’ replied Melville, ‘and I think whatever introduced those large parties, the gentlemen, at least those who cannot or who do not wish to marry, have greatly benefitted by them.—As



for those who really desire to enter into that happy state, but who wish to be in love first, the case is different. For my part, when I see around me so many lovely young faces, and slightly attired persons, I first wonder how any man can preserve his heart, and then how it is possible to lose it; for, after you have seen one look, and smile, and dimple, till your heart is going, you have only to look around you, and you see twenty just as charming, and you forget the first, and so on for ever. Now, to go where there are, perhaps, an old father, who talks of nothing that has happened within your recollection, and a mother who is no more modern in any way, it follows, of course, that you fall in love with the blooming daughter, who appears completely irresistible from the contrast.'

The sound of Miss Weston's harp now arrested the attention of our little party. Her voice, too, seemed charming; but when loud enough to be distinctly heard, the party at the card-table raised in an equal degree their tones of peevish reproach, or angry retort.

'Are you fond of music, Lady Dunallan,' asked Miss Morven.

'Yes; extremely so.'

'Shall we go nearer Miss Weston, then? for I fear we shall not enjoy any harmonious sounds in this corner.' Catharine consented, and they approached the part of the room where Miss Weston sat. She was a plain looking girl, rather coarse in her figure and appearance; and, excepting Rose Lennox, who, looking very pretty and modest, stood close by her, no one paid her any attention. The little apartment had nearly filled with people, but they had separated into parties, and talked and laughed without any regard whatever to the poor harp-player, who, nevertheless, continued to go through a long and elaborate piece with great skill and execution. Two young men stood near Rose and attempted to draw her into conversation, but in vain; she continued politely attentive to her mother's guest, and the two gentlemen were also obliged to become patient listeners.

Every eye was immediately fixed on Catharine when she issued from her retreat, and approached to where Miss Weston sat; and by degrees several people joined also as listeners, or rather that they might gaze at a new face in the fashionable



world. Catharine, however, unconscious of the notice she attracted, continued to listen with pleased attention to a degree of skill and knowledge of music she had never before heard possessed by a lady. Her attention was excited at last, by the appearance of a lady and gentleman, who attempted to enter into conversation with Miss Morven, but whom she avoided with the most marked coldness, though Catharine thought there was something in their appearance strikingly noble and pleasing. The gentleman, she knew not why, reminded her of Dunallan; he did not exactly resemble him, but there was something in his air and manner that made her heart beat by recalling him. The lady was not young, but Catharine thought she had never before seen so beautiful a countenance, or so graceful a form. Her attention became completely occupied by the strangers; their eyes, too, were constantly turned towards her.

At last Miss Weston's piece of music came to a close. Mrs Lennox loaded her with flattery and thanks. When Miss Weston had retired amongst her young friends, Mrs Lennox said in a loud whisper to Miss Morven,

'Ah! if you heard Lady Dunallan's harp!—but I must not hope to-night to ——'

'Certainly not,' interrupted Catharine, with displeasure.

Mrs Lennox turned to the beautiful stranger: 'Lady Fitzhenry, I fear I shall not be able to gratify you as I rashly promised.'

Lady Fitzhenry smiled with the most captivating sweetness. 'The reason you have already given us, Mrs Lennox, is too good, too amiable for me even to desire to overcome it for my own gratification.'

'I had promised, my dear Lady Dunallan,' resumed Mrs Lennox, 'that I should use all the little influence I possessed with you to induce you to sing a Scotch song with all its native unadorned sweetness.'

Catharine blushed deeply; every eye was fixed upon her. 'I believe,' said she, looking at the stranger, 'I should not save Mrs Lennox's breach of promise by complying with her wish.'

Miss Morven, who stood by Catharine, gently touched her arm. Catharine turned to her. Miss Morven stepped past her



and looked at the music book, which was open on the stand, then turning her face to Catharine, and thus concealing it from the strangers:—

‘You wished to know whose music that was,’ said she; then, as she passed into her former place, she said in a low voice, ‘don’t sing.’

Catharine was surprised; however, on Mrs Lennox again hinting her wish, she positively declined singing.

Lady Fitzhenry looked disappointed, and Catharine could not resist saying to her, as she retired from the circle with Miss Morven:—

‘I hope I shall at some other time have it in my power to prove how happy I should be to oblige you.’

Lady Fitzhenry returned her thanks, in the most graceful manner, from which Miss Morven turned away with apparent disgust.

Catharine then took leave of Mrs Lennox and Rose, and quitted the apartment—but not before she heard Lady Fitzhenry say with a deep sigh to the gentleman who accompanied her, and on whose arm she leant, ‘She is indeed very charming.’

When Catharine was seated in the carriage with her own party, and Miss Morven, who had consented that they should convey her home, Miss Morven said:—

‘I have come into your carriage, Lady Dunallan, to entreat your forgiveness, and to explain my reasons for so soon having taken the privilege of a friend.’

‘I beg you will only tell me who that charming looking couple are,’ replied Catharine, ‘and why they seem to possess so little of your esteem.’

‘Because I know them to be as worthless as they are singularly charming,’ replied Miss Morven.

‘Worthless! and how could Mrs Lennox have them at her house?’

‘Charity, my dear Lady Dunallan,’ said Melville; ‘nobody is certain of their misdeeds; but suspicions are strong against them.’

‘I never saw so handsome a man!’ exclaimed Helen: ‘I



declare he looked like a prince, or king, compared to the other gentleman.'

'We are greatly flattered, Miss Graham,' said Melville.

'But who are they?' asked Catharine.

'The gentleman's name is Sir Henry Moncton,' replied Miss Morven. 'He has long openly admired Lady Fitzhenry, although he is a married man. Poor Lady Moncton stays quietly at home with her children, while this cruel husband attends Lady Fitzhenry with the most devoted attention wherever she goes. Lady Fitzhenry's husband is excessively worthless every way, and quite regardless of the reputation of his wife, who, though she does not exactly reside with Sir Henry, is never seen without him. She is very literary, and I believe highly accomplished in every way. She wishes to go abroad, but as that is almost impossible at present, she is to remain here for a short time. I am peculiarly alive to the greatness of her guilt, perhaps, because some members of her family are my most intimate friends; and I know her conduct has thrown a dark cloud over their happiest days; particularly over those of her eldest brother General Hartford, who has left no effort untried, which kindness could dictate, to reclaim her.'

It was fortunate for Catharine that there was no light to betray the emotion which the last part of Miss Morven's speech occasioned; and when she added, 'could I suffer you, Lady Dunallan, to be charmed into doing any thing you disapproved, by such a woman?' Catharine replied with so much emotion,

'I am more obliged to you than I have words to express,' that Elizabeth could not help laughing.

'Surely, my dear Catharine,' said she, 'you were in no danger of being injured by this amiable person.'

Catharine remained silent till the carriage stopt. Her thoughts dwelt on what she had heard. She must have seen Dunallan's Aspasia! Did he know how guilty she still was? What a dark cloud must the knowledge of her guilt throw also over his happiest days!

When the carriage stopt, Catharine took leave of Miss Morven, after obtaining her promise to spend part of next day with her and Elizabeth.



After a few minutes conversation with Elizabeth, Catharine retired to her apartment. It was past the hour at which she had promised to meet Dunallan in the most sacred of all duties. She felt wrong, and unkind, and unhappy. The busy scene she had left—Lady Fitzhenry—all swam before her eyes, and led away her thoughts when she wished to collect them in devotion. Before she was aware, her attempt to examine her own heart, as she always wished to do before she closed the day, gave way to an attempt to discover why Sir Henry Moncton so greatly resembled Dunallan! She supposed their manners had been formed in the same society. She again attempted to perform those duties which generally gave her satisfaction—sometimes delight, but she could not succeed, and bursting into tears, she implored the mercy of Heaven for herself, and for Dunallan, and then retired to sleep, at first broken and disturbed, but at length tranquil and profound.

---

## CHAPTER XX.

NEXT morning, Catharine, with more self-command, reviewed the events of the preceding evening, and the manner in which she had spent it. She knew that such was the usual way of spending time by people in her situation. She was ignorant of Dunallan's opinion on the subject; but she thought it impossible that he should approve of what, even to her, appeared inconsistent with that regulation of thought and spirit—that separation from the follies and vices of the world, which she believed was required in Scripture. When she recalled Mrs Lennox's anxious countenance, her gross flattery, and above all her want of principle, which could allow fashion so to blind her,—which could suffer a mother to introduce such people as Sir Henry Moncton and Lady Fitzhenry to the acquaintance of a son and daughter—people who seemed formed to make vice seducing, she shuddered at the idea of ever being so infatuated; 'and yet,' thought she, 'what reason have I to imagine that I should escape the errors that such a life leads to, if I pursued it?' She tried to



avoid thinking of Lady Fitzhenry. All regarding her was painful. What a continued source of misery must her life of guilt be to Dunallan! Never did she feel so thankful for that mercy which had snatched him from ruin! This morning she expected a letter from him, and with mixed feelings awaited its arrival. At last she received it, just as she expected to be summoned to breakfast. It was the first in which he had ventured to indulge in expressions of tenderness, and she soon forgot that Aspasia, or any other being, existed in the world but him.

‘My dear Dunallan, my guide, my friend, my husband!’ exclaimed she at last, in a low tone of voice. Again she read the concluding expressions.

‘And now I must say adieu, my own Catharine, and again continue this journey, which every moment carries me farther from her who is now the first earthly charm of my existence. The idea of you brings to me all that is lovely and loveable on earth; and more than earth can claim—a sister spirit, with whom, after enjoying as much dear intercourse as is possible in this imperfect state of existence, I hope to live for ever. Adieu, my love. To the tender care, the only wise care, of that Almighty, ever present Friend, in whom you believe and trust, to Him, in humble confidence, I now commend my beloved wife. How sweet, my Catharine, are the ideas associated with this dearest of appellations! But I must not trust myself; but again say that hateful little word that contains so much painful meaning, adieu! That we may never again say it, is the earnest prayer of your

‘DUNALLAN.’

‘May we indeed never again say that painful word!’ sighed Catharine. She then sank into a sweet and pleasing dream, from which she was awakened by the entrance of Elizabeth.

‘O Catharine! that blush tells whose letter has detained you so late this morning.’

‘Late! Elizabeth; I did not know that it was late.’

‘It is very late, however, my dear; and Martin, after several attempts to induce you to join us, to which, she says, you always assented, has at last given up her efforts, I suppose in despair.’



‘I believe I did hear her say something about breakfast, but I soon forgot. Am I indeed very late?’

‘So late that Melville has gone out in despair of seeing you, and Miss Morven has been here for an hour.’

‘Dear Elizabeth, how could you allow me?’

Catharine hurried down stairs, and with many conscious blushes, apologized to Miss Morven for her lateness.

‘I do not think you have suffered from your dissipation of last night, Lady Dunallan,’ said Miss Morven, smiling.

Catharine again blushed, conscious of the real cause of her glowing looks. ‘One evening, I suppose, may be productive of no evil consequences,’ replied she; ‘but I do earnestly hope my lot may never make it necessary for me to spend my evenings in such a crowd, such a tiresome bustle. I have poor Mrs Lennox’s face still before me—so busy, so dissatisfied, and uneasy. Pray, Miss Morven, is that the usual happy state of the lady of the house on such occasions?’

‘Oh no,’ replied Miss Morven, ‘poor Mrs Lennox is, I see, quite new to such kind of parties; and supposes it necessary that every one should be amused and attended to by herself, as she must do in the country when her Highland neighbours visit her. A really fashionable lady would be greatly amused with poor Mrs Lennox toiling from card-table to harp-player, and stopping a moment near each little party, to ascertain whether they are enjoying themselves; and then bustling away to procure unwilling partners for the poor neglected misses, who sit drooping in the dancing-room. But,’ added Miss Morven, ‘it is impossible to judge for others. There must be some charm in those large parties to the people who so regularly attend them, which to me is quite unaccountable; yet it is too uncharitable to think that all who spend evening after evening in such scenes, do so either from want of mind or principle.’

‘I think,’ said Elizabeth, ‘I could easily discover good motives for the presence of many of those who go to such parties. I shall begin with myself. I know Melville would never go if I did not, because he tires to death; yet it is proper that a man in his profession should both acquire new acquaintances, and retain those he has. I do not see how this is possible, unless



one mixes in society in the only way one can; and I really do not feel any bad consequences from it. Then mothers, who have grown-up daughters to dispose of, I need not say how impossible it would be for them, in the present state of society, to accomplish this, were they to banish themselves from such parties. Then young ladies and young gentlemen, naturally and innocently love each other's society wherever they can find it. I really am at a loss to discover what you find so improper in these parties, Miss Morven. You, too, Catharine, seem to regard them as dangerous to every thing good.'

'I certainly do *feel*,' replied Catharine, 'that they would be dangerous to every thing good in myself at least.'

'But why, dear Catharine?' asked Elizabeth.

'Because,' replied Catharine, 'they seem to me quite inconsistent with that state of mind and feeling which, I think, we are required by Scripture to cultivate; and which, when in any degree attained, is so delightful, that I should dread losing it more than any other earthly blessing.'

'But I know of no feeling, Catharine, recommended in Scripture, which would be injured by witnessing our fellow-creatures amused and happy.'

'I think Scripture requires us, for our own improvement, my dear Elizabeth, to have the presence of our Creator, and our duty to Him, so constantly uppermost in our thoughts, that whatever we do, or think, or say, should be guided by a desire to please Him, and to honour Him as far as such creatures can. Now, what did we witness last night calculated to produce such a state of feeling? On the contrary, did we not derive our amusement partly from the follies of others? Can any one pretend to say that the spirit which prevailed last night, was the spirit of religion? You smile, Elizabeth, at the idea; but can it be right to spend our time in society which is so governed by other principles, that the very idea of religion having any influence excites a smile of ridicule?'

'But still, Catharine, there is nothing contrary to the spirit of religion.'

'Not even in the presence of such people as Sir Henry Moncton and Lady Fitzhenry?' asked Miss Morven, smiling.



‘But there is no necessity for having such people at our parties,’ replied Elizabeth; ‘and many who frequently have such parties, would be quite as scrupulous in that respect as the very strictest Methodist could be.’

‘Methodist!’ repeated Catharine.

‘Yes, my dearest Catharine. You are not aware of it, but your sentiments are becoming quite methodistical.’

‘What do you mean by “methodistical,” my dear Elizabeth?’

‘I mean that narrow uncharitable spirit which limits all goodness to a few strict, and, to people who live in the world, impracticable rules,—such as never going to a party of more than a few religious people, or at least mostly religious—never stirring out on Sunday, unless to go half a dozen times to hear some canting preacher—never opening your mouth but to pronounce some religious sentence; and holding in utter contempt all the pleasures derived from the cultivation of taste, or literature, or whatever can embellish or charm in life,—indeed, every thing but the contemptible pursuits of the self-satisfied sect.’

Catharine smiled;—‘My dear Elizabeth, I am not conscious of being guilty of any of the crimes you have mentioned.’

‘Nor would those who are dignified by the epithet of methodists recognise themselves in Mrs Melville’s character of them,’ said Miss Morven with some severity.

Elizabeth reddened. ‘I speak from report,’ said she; ‘I am not myself acquainted with any methodist.’

‘Yes you are,’ replied Miss Morven smiling, ‘unless you mean to strike me out of the list of your acquaintances.’

‘You, my dear Miss Morven!’ replied Elizabeth, blushing deeply, ‘I have heard you accused of this peculiarity I confess, but I always defended you with all the eloquence I possessed.’

‘I, however, deserve the contemptuous appellation in the sense it is usually applied. I hope, at the day of reckoning, I may only be found amongst those who have borne it through lives that ought to have proved the perfection of any principles. But now, my dear Mrs Melville, I entreat you will be equally frank with me, and answer me, whether you think it can be possible to be too anxious to please the Divine Being?’

‘Certainly not.’



‘Then if we are convinced, by the way we understand Scripture, that a certain line of thoughts, and feelings, and actions, are alone pleasing to Him, are we wrong in pursuing that course, however unlike it may be to that of others?’

‘Assuredly not.’

‘Well, my dear Mrs Melville, this is all we do, and why is this so disagreeable?’

‘I did not say any thing Miss Morven did was disagreeable,’ replied Elizabeth, smiling.

‘No; but you seemed to think Lady Dunallan would become much less amiable by adopting the opinions of those who are called methodists, and I only heard her express what I have just said—an earnest desire to regulate her thoughts and feelings so as to please her God.’

Elizabeth hesitated—and then said, ‘I perhaps felt so, because Catharine, instead of replying to my question, how it was possible to live in the world, without taking society as we found it, began talking religiously, I do not know how.’

‘I do not recollect what I said, dear Elizabeth,’ said Catharine, ‘but perhaps I did not feel that I could answer your question. I certainly do not see how you can otherwise be in society; but I cannot argue this subject with you on these grounds. If it is absolutely necessary for Mr Melville to court the world, he must do it, but I cannot perceive this necessity; yet do not suppose that I think Mr Melville should not mix in society. I do not intend by any means to say so. I mean only to say, that I think I should myself be injured by doing so very often; and that I can feel the necessity, the absolute necessity of only one thing, either for myself or others, which is to learn the way of salvation for our souls; for, What shall we profit, if we gain the whole world, and lose them?’

‘True, my dear Catharine; I believe that miserable old party we saw at the card-table last night would have agreed with you thus far, though they might differ with you as to what is necessary to secure this safety to the soul. I believe, my dear Catharine, we must not expect all to travel on the same road to heaven; but let us leave this subject—it is new and very painful to me to differ from you,’ added Elizabeth, tears starting



into her eyes as she spoke. 'If you please, we shall avoid this subject for the future.' Catharine took her hand affectionately in hers, 'I cannot promise this, my own Elizabeth; I love you too dearly; but for a few days I shall avoid it, if you will promise to think seriously of what I am going to ask you.'

'I will, Catharine.'

'Well, my Elizabeth, do you think it possible that it could be necessary for the Son of God himself to leave his glory, and veil himself in the human form, and live on earth so many years, suffering grief and contempt, and at last an ignominious and agonizing death, if the salvation of our souls, for which He endured all this, is a matter of so little moment that we may venture to trifle or delay attending to it? Do you think our Saviour did not mean what He said, when He assured his hearers that "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth to everlasting life, and few there be that find it?" Will you think of this, and answer me, Elizabeth?'

'I will, my dear Catharine,' replied Elizabeth, very gravely, and becoming pale on seeing the extreme earnestness of Catharine's looks and manner.

Catharine kissed her cheek tenderly.

After a short pause, Elizabeth asked how they should spend the day.

'You shall decide, my dear Elizabeth,' said Catharine: 'Perhaps, if Miss Morven is disengaged, she will join our little party in the evening; you know my aunt and cousins are to be with us.'

Miss Morven immediately consented.

'The first thing we do, must be to leave our cards at Mrs Lennox's door, however,' said Elizabeth.

It was agreed that this should be done immediately.

Mrs Lennox had given orders that if Lady Dunallan called she should be admitted; so Catharine and her party were obliged to pay her a visit. They found her apparently in excessively bad humour, which she at first with difficulty suppressed, though she received Catharine and her friends with her usual exclamations of joy. Rose's joy was real.

'I am glad to see you *can* look happy, Rose,' said her mother,



with an expression of resentment, which showed there had been some recent cause of displeasure.

‘Yes, dear mamma,’ said Rose, smiling sweetly in her face, ‘we can both be happy now; and you know that I cannot be so when it is otherwise.’

Mrs Lennox turned away her angry eyes, and remained silent for a moment; then turning to Catharine, ‘Do you know, Lady Dunallan, you surprised every one last night?’

‘Surprised every one!’ repeated Catharine, with a look of apprehension,—‘how?’

‘Oh, I shall tell you how. I do not know what I had said before you came. I had, to be sure, prepared some of my friends to see what the style of beauty was I admired more than any other. Well, I do not know what kind of taste they supposed me to have, but when you left the room, Sir George Campbell, who is thought a great connoisseur in beauty, came to me; “well, Sir George,” said I, “are you disappointed?” “Extremely so, Madam.” You smile, Lady Dunallan,—but wait a little. “Disappointed!” repeated I.” “Yes, Madam.—I expected that I should see one of those charming creatures—a gay young beauty, willing to show her lovely smiles to any one who chose to win them from her by a sufficient degree of flattery and admiration; instead of which, this beauty of yours is one of those touching creatures I never dare approach, because I cannot get rid of the impression they make on me; and because there is such dignity in their youthful assumption of matronly staidness of manner, that I cannot venture to address them as I do common beauties.”’

‘I am very glad I looked so matronly,’ said Catharine, smiling.

‘And Lady Fitzhenry,’ continued Mrs Lennox, ‘could talk of no one else after you were gone. “Is that the young lady,” asked she, “who has lived almost entirely in seclusion?” and then she raved about your beauty and manners.’

‘Now, Mrs Lennox,’ said Catharine, smiling, ‘do not you begin with all these pretty speeches about me, to avert the question you must expect from a lady who has always lived in seclusion,—how you possibly can admit such people as Lady Fitzhenry and Sir Henry Moncton into your house?’



‘Not at all, my dear. Your asking such a question only proves how innocently ignorant you are of the ways of the fashionable world.’

‘I hope I shall continue ignorant of such bad ways, Mrs Lennox.’

‘Well, wait a little—we shall see. But Lady Fitzhenry’s taste, at least, cannot be disputed; besides, Sir Henry also joined in admiring you. And Lady Fitzhenry asked so very particularly and minutely about Lord Dunallan,—where he was, when he had left you, and a thousand other questions,—and with such very deep interest, I really was half surprised myself, well as I know the impression your appearance makes on strangers.’

Catharine felt uneasy, yet dreaded betraying any emotion.

Do not speak any more of these people to me, Mrs Lennox,’ said she, with forced gaiety; ‘you surely do not wish them to make a conquest of me in return.’

‘Oh no. Yet I am sure you would like Lady Fitzhenry if you knew her. She is a very charming woman.’

‘She has no charm at all for me,’ said Rose. ‘Every sentiment or opinion almost, that she utters, is to me unnatural or erroneous; and her manners are far too refinedly free. But here is her carriage, I think,’ continued Rose, leaning towards the window, then drawing back that she might not be observed. ‘Mamma, did you desire her to be admitted? the servant is opening the carriage door.’

Mrs Lennox looked confused. Miss Morven immediately rose.

‘Do not go, I entreat you,’ exclaimed Mrs Lennox; but Catharine immediately rose also, and took leave of Mrs Lennox with a look of offended dignity.

Lady Fitzhenry was just entering as they left the apartment. She stood back until they passed, and returned Catharine’s cold and slight curtsy with one of such graceful lowliness, and accompanied by such an expression of humility, that Catharine was touched, and when she got into the carriage, remarked it to Miss Morven.

Miss Morven’s cheek still glowed. ‘Intolerable!’ exclaimed she, ‘to be forced to meet such a woman. You remark her



lowliness of manner; why should she have it, unless she is conscious of guilt? and if so, she loses the excuse her friends wish to plead for her, that her very powers of judging between right and wrong have been destroyed by the principles she has adopted.'

'But she must be aware,' said Elizabeth, 'that she is condemned by others; and that is a depressing feeling.'

'Unhappy creature!' exclaimed Catharine, with much emotion. 'How pitiable to see one, apparently so feeling, so superior in talent, so captivating in manners, thus completely lost!'

'Yes,' replied Miss Morven, 'it is truly so. I cannot, however, suppose she possesses feeling, at least not the kind of feeling you mean. She has no pity for others. A father, brothers, sisters, have all been sacrificed by her, to feeling, she would say, but I say to selfish guilty passions. I have no patience for the admiration and pity this woman inspires,' continued Miss Morven, 'in my opinion there cannot be a more worthless creature. Had you seen her father, Lady Dunallan, or you Mrs Melville, so venerable! such a noble countenance! his character held in the highest honour by all who knew him—had you seen him, as I did, return from visiting this guilty woman, in the hope of reviving some feeling of virtue in her breast; had you seen him, struggling with shame and indignation, and remaining tenderness, command his family never more to mention her name in his presence, and then from day to day sink into deeper dejection, until his life became the victim to her shame! had you heard his dying message to this cruel daughter, "Tell Augusta that I forgive her, though she has brought my grey hairs with shame and sorrow to the grave," you would feel as I do.'

'And did she ever hear that message?' asked Catharine, greatly shocked.

'General Hartford himself conveyed it to her.'

'And what followed?'

'Her brother hoped it had made some impression; but no—in less than two months she again appeared in public in all the outward marks of woe, but constantly attended by Sir Henry



Moncton. She, however, did look ill, and there was a story told that during these two months, or a part of them, her spirits had been so miserably low, that at one time she had attempted to put an end to her existence by swallowing a quantity of laudanum. I know not, however, whether there is any truth in this story.'

Catharine felt greatly shocked, and when again alone, her thoughts were deeply occupied with Miss Morven's account of the unhappy Lady Fitzhenry. Could Dunallan know all her guilt and want of feeling? He probably did, and Catharine thought with pain of the many wretched hours her conduct must occasion him. There was but one event which could remove this wretchedness—a total change of heart and life in Lady Fitzhenry. Was this likely? Catharine remembered that the Christian religion excluded none from its hopes—none, however depraved, from its offer of renovation of heart, and complete forgiveness. Lady Fitzhenry she now regarded with very painful interest for Dunallan's sake. She recollected what Churchill had said, 'That in her conscience there seemed to be no light,' and she fervently raised her soul to Heaven in behalf of this unhappy woman; and from that day she prayed regularly for that mercy and light from Heaven to rest on the perverted and guilty Lady Fitzhenry, which she sought not for herself, and was apparently unconscious she required.

Next morning, and every morning following for several days, brought a letter to Catharine from Dunallan, each succeeding one more tenderly affectionate than the former. In his last he said—'I have now spent two days almost constantly with my miserable brother-in-law. I shall not shock you, either by describing the situation in which I found him, or the state of his mind. The last, indeed, is indescribable. No language could convey to you the deep and settled gloom which has taken possession of him, and which only gives place to moments of horror so overpowering, that he seems unconscious of the presence of those around him, and gives expression to the agony of his feelings with such vehemence, and in language so appalling, that even the hardened beings I found attending on him, did so with reluctance. Can I witness a mind in such a state, my dearest



Catharine, and not remember from what I myself have been saved, and to whose providence do I owe my ever having known my beloved Churchill? Poor Harcourt is no more ignorant of true religion than I was, before that friend of my soul, with such unwearied patience, pursued me with instruction. I now attempt to follow Churchill's example of patience in watching every moment for an opportunity to introduce into the mind of Harcourt, some ray of light, or hope, or peace, from the only source of truth—the word of God; but to the admission of light, or hope, or peace, his mind seems closed in the hardness of stone, and the darkness of eternal night. Walderford is now in London, and, with Christian compassion, joins me in watching over this wretched being. Another dear and feeling friend, a clergyman, also visits him. He is best pleased when we are all with him, but nothing for a moment dispels the awful gloom of his awakened conscience. My indefatigably kind friend Clanmar has procured a house for us near his own, in ——— Square, to which Harcourt was removed this morning, my agent, Mr Howell, having accommodated matters with his creditors. Harcourt has no wish to see his children; indeed whatever would recal the past he seems to dread would only add to his misery. I think, however, that his seeing them might tend to soften his feelings, and any softness of heart in his present state might, I think, be a means of good; but I feel that I am selfish in this wish, so shall not attempt to find good reasons. I have written to my aunt; I think she will come; and if so, she will be in Edinburgh two days after you receive this; she will remain one night, and on the day after I trust I may hope that my Catharine is on the road to London. I shall not trust myself to say more.'

In another part of his letter Dunallan wrote:—

'You ask me, my Catharine, to tell you if I have seen St Clair, and *exactly* to describe his looks and manner on meeting me. I shall attempt to do as you wish. I have met him twice for short intervals, at Clanmar's. His looks and manner are as cold and contemptuous as possible, and certainly convey as much aversion and hatred, as looks or manner could convey. I have, both times we met, avoided all intercourse with him, further



than common civility required, and will continue, my Catharine, to do so, while his feelings seem so unconquerably hostile towards me; but I never return his looks of contempt; indeed how can I feel any thing but pity for him, when I recollect how long and intimately he was acquainted with the loveliest and most attractive woman I ever knew, and how much his natural vanity had led him to hope? So you see, my sweet friend, how groundless your apprehensions on this subject are; indeed I scarcely understand them, for you know, that whatever treatment this St Clair chooses to bestow on me, as a Christian I must just patiently bear it.

‘Before I leave this subject, however, I must tell you that I am acquainted with what you intended to keep secret from me. My aunt, dreading further misunderstandings between us, has informed me of your having written to St Clair. I suppose, my love, he has not attended to your request. I do not suppose he ever will; indeed, when I recollect how you are to prove to me that you never wrote those cruel letters, I wish he never may. You remember, Catharine, how you are to prove this—by your kindness—your affection for me. I think I shall be very difficult to convince.’

Catharine, after reading this letter, could think little of any part of its contents, compared to the passage respecting St Clair. She perceived that he did not mean to answer her letter to him. He might have done so, since there had been time for Dunallan’s receiving Mrs Oswald’s letter; and his continued and evident hatred of Dunallan, she felt certain, foreboded evil. She had known St Clair from his early youth, and there was a determined resolution in his character, and a carelessness of what means he used to attain a purpose on which he had once fixed, which she now recollected with terror. Dunallan too, seemed so little on his guard, that her fears increased the longer she allowed herself to think.

Next morning her forebodings seem realized—the usual hour passed, and no letter came from Dunallan. She could not suppress her disappointment and anxiety; yet what cause had she to expect she should hear from him every day? No other than that she had hitherto done so. She could not, however, reason



herself into any peace of mind. Her apprehensions increased with her attempts to overcome them. Ashamed, however, to confess to Elizabeth that Dunallan's omitting to write one day occasioned her so much uneasiness, and unwilling to reveal the real cause of her anxiety, she suffered her friend to suppose that her pale looks proceeded from headache. It was Sunday, and Elizabeth objected to her taking an aching head to church, but Catharine hoped to find support there for her oppressed spirits, and insisted on going.

Elizabeth, as they went, praised the eloquence of the preacher they were to hear, and Catharine, when he pronounced, in an emphatic and solemn voice, the beautiful words of Scripture on which he meant to discourse, felt how admirably suitable the consolation offered by the Author of our existence is to his creatures in every situation: 'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.' Catharine reproached herself for having for an instant sought to stay her mind on any other support, and she soon felt that calm which accompanies the persuasion that we rest upon Omnipotence. The preacher's ideas, however, instead of increasing this delightful feeling, rather weakened it, by the distance at which he kept from explaining the nature of that support which the feelings and necessities of the human heart require. He spoke of grief and disappointment, and anxiety of mind, and of the insufficiency of all human support, but this was all he seemed himself to have learned. When he spoke of the support given by God to his creatures, he so clothed his ideas in metaphors, that the heart which really sought some place of refuge and strength saw none where to fix.

'You have seen,' said he, 'the wide expanse of heaven clothed with dark and threatening clouds, their gloom so deep that they obscured the cheering rays of that glorious orb on which all nature depends for life and joy. You still believed, however, that his beams shone resplendently behind that gloomy veil. You have seen him, before he left your sky to sink into the ocean, rend the dark veil, and after skirting its edges with glory, burst upon your sight in all his brightness, while mountains, fields, woods, and the broad deep, as if rejoicing in his return,



reflected his rays with glorious splendour ; thus will you feel, my friends, when prosperity again beams upon you, if in adversity you have stayed your minds on God.' And thus he went on from one metaphor to another, while his admiring audience listened to words which had no power to do more than please the imagination. It was only in describing the deeper religious feelings, however, that he had recourse to such unintelligible language. In matters less connected with the devotion of the heart, he was simple and wise, as well as eloquent.

When the service was over, Elizabeth whispered to Catharine, 'I am sure you must be pleased.' Catharine shook her head. Elizabeth seemed disappointed, and rather displeased.

Miss Morven joined them as they left the church. When they had got into the carriage, Elizabeth appealed to Miss Morven whether any thing could be more beautiful than what they had just heard.

'Beautiful indeed, in some parts,' replied Miss Morven, 'but tell me what does the prophet mean when he speaks of staying our hearts on God? I am sure I understand his words no better than when I entered the church. Clouds—prosperity—sun—he left us all in the clouds whenever I particularly wished him to be clear and explicit.'

Elizabeth attempted, but in vain, to explain the language of her favourite orator.

'If you will spend the interval, until afternoon church with me,' said Miss Morven, 'I think I can undertake to introduce you to a better preacher.'

Catharine and her friend consented, and after Miss Morven had, with some difficulty, directed the servants to the place, they stopped at the entrance into a narrow lane, which Miss Morven called — Close. She seemed quite at home in this wretched part of the town, and conducted her friends to the top of a flight of steps, which Catharine recognised as those described by Rose Lennox. Miss Morven opened the door in the dark passage, and herself led the way into the apartment where the poor family resided. All was now as comfortable as the smallness of the place would admit. The sick woman sat up in bed, supported by pillows, while the mother and the sister, with her



poor little child in her lap, sat close by her. A Bible lay upon Mary's bed.

'How are you, Mary?' said Miss Morven, holding out her hand with the gentleness and familiarity of a sister.

Mary clasped it in both of hers, her eyes sparkling with pleasure. 'Dear, blessed Miss Morven!' exclaimed she.

'I have brought two friends of mine to see you, Mary,' continued Miss Morven, 'and to stay with you between sermons. This is Lady Dunallan, who sent you so many things.'

Catharine held out her hand to her—she looked earnestly at Catharine, who smiled in return. 'You look as if you knew me, Mary.'

'Oh no, my lady, but I seldom see such sights.' She then looked at Elizabeth with great pleasure, and turning to Miss Morven, said with an expression of elevated joy, 'How delightful to see such ladies brought to remember their glorious Creator in the days of their youth. Oh! ladies, how much you have in your power!'

Catharine, refusing to take the seat of the poor sister who held the child, sat down on Mary's bed. Miss Morven and Elizabeth did the same; and Catharine lifting the Bible, Mary said she had been attempting to read to her mother and sister, but the exertion had increased the cough and pain in her side so much, she had been forced to stop. Catharine offered to read, and the poor people accepted of her offer with much gratitude. She turned to the passage on which the clergyman had preached, and began reading from the commencement of the chapter. When she came to the passage, Mary clasped her hands together, exclaiming in a low voice, 'Yes, perfect—perfect peace!' Catharine stopped. 'What do you think is the meaning of this passage, Mary?' asked she.

'Ah, Madam?' replied Mary, 'I am sure you know its meaning by sweet experience; but if you wish me to add my testimony to the truth of this precious promise, I can say that the peace I enjoy, when I simply rely on my Lord and Redeemer for the salvation of my soul, and for deliverance from darkness and sin, and resign all my cares and sorrows into his hands, is so delightful—so perfect—I would not exchange it for health, and



friends, and plenty ; no, not for all the world has to offer without it.'

Mary's countenance expressed even more than her words. Elizabeth turned away, to conceal the tears she could not suppress. Miss Morven and Catharine smiled with softened pleasure to each other. Catharine then continued to read for some time to the poor people, who audibly expressed their emotions as she proceeded. When she had finished, Mary thanked her with such moving expressions from Scripture, that Catharine felt she was the gainer. 'Blessed,' said Mary, 'is she that considereth the poor. The Lord will deliver her in the time of trouble. The Lord will preserve her, and keep her alive, and she shall be blessed upon the earth. The Lord will strengthen her upon the bed of languishing. Thou wilt make all her bed in her sickness. He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.'

Catharine entered into conversation with the other sister.

'I believe your husband is abroad?'

'Yes, my lady.'

'And you have not heard very lately from him?'

'Not for two years, my lady ; but Miss Morven has found out for me that he is alive in India.'

'I rejoice to hear that ! How happy this intelligence must have made you. Should you like to go to him ? for you shall be enabled if you wish it.'

'Oh ! my lady, I should like it well, but I must not think of it. Do not say any thing about it if you please, my lady. I must not leave my mother and Mary ; I know he is alive, that is a great mercy. O what days I have spent when I thought he might be gone for ever, and knew not whether he was prepared for his change ? That was a heavy burden to bear !'

'Heavy indeed !' repeated Catharine, her own anxiety about Dunallan on such comparatively trifling grounds returning to her recollection.

'O Madam,' said the woman, 'if I knew that he had a regard for the everlasting interests of his soul, I could easily bear any thing, I think, that the Lord should choose to lay upon me.'

Catharine's heart smote her for her unthankfulness. 'This is indeed a sermon,' thought she. She then inquired more par-



ticularly regarding what means of intercourse the woman had with her husband; and making herself mistress of all the information respecting him that she could, she hoped that Dunallan would be able to assist her in procuring some intelligence respecting him for his poor wife.

When Catharine and her friends took leave of this suffering family, each member of it seemed really happy. The two little girls had come in from church, looking well and joyous. Poor Mary, as she raised her eyes to heaven, fervently imploring a blessing on her benefactresses, seemed beyond the reach of this world's griefs; and the tranquillity of her soul gave to her countenance an expression so heavenly, that, as Miss Morven remarked when they left her, no one could think it kindness to wish to keep her from that state, in which only she could now find those holy joys, of which her soul seemed to enjoy a foretaste on this side the grave.

Catharine and Elizabeth accompanied Miss Morven to another church in the afternoon. It was meaner in its appearance, very crowded, but half filled with poor people. The clergyman's eloquence was only that of the heart, yet Catharine felt it more affecting than the flowing language of the other, or rather his ideas were more so. He too discoursed on the consolation afforded by religion in situations of distress; but where the last preacher had seemed to lose himself in vain uncertainty, the present seemed to speak from the most intimate knowledge of his subject. 'If we have indeed received the Lord Jesus Christ for our Lord and Master,' said he, 'we must be certain He is leading us in that road which will terminate in everlasting happiness, however rough some parts of it may appear to be. Why do we call ourselves his servants? Why do we profess to believe in his wisdom, his truth, his care, his love, and yet shrink from the very expressions of those towards ourselves? If we truly believed, we would lay ourselves in humility at his feet, and say, Lord we know that we cannot guide our own hearts and ways; we know that Thou only canst sanctify and prepare us for thyself. Take our hearts, and in thy own wisdom mould them by what means Thou wilt into thy glorious likeness; Thou knowest all our temptations and weakness, order every cir-



cumstance in our lives, for our ultimate eternal happiness with Thee—regard not our prayers, but as they tend to those only valuable ends. Thus believing, we should look on every event as coming immediately from that wisdom which cannot err—from that love which is more deep—more tender than we can conceive. We should be ready to accept whatever He sent us, as best and kindest, though it should appear clothed in all that excites present anguish. Believing thus, we should experience his power to support, and even to enable us to rejoice in the most severe afflictions.'

Catharine listened with the deepest interest, and fervently raised her heart in prayer to heaven, that this firm trust, this devotion of every feeling and every wish to the will of her heavenly Lord, might be imparted to her. She was deeply affected, so much so, that after Miss Morven, who seemed to understand her feelings, had left her, and she returned to Elizabeth's house, she found it irksome to enter into conversation with those around her. Elizabeth, knowing her newly acquired ideas about keeping Sunday, had declined going, as she usually did, to her mother's, but had invited her family to spend the day with her, telling Catharine she should prescribe the way in which they should pass the evening. Catharine, however, longed for solitude; and, after staying with her young relations until Melville had read a sermon, during which Elizabeth listened with deep attention, Melville swallowed a hundred yawns, and Helen Graham in vain attempted to suppress the smiles which Elizabeth's brother Arthur purposely provoked; she retired to her own apartment to indulge those devotional feelings which were deeply wounded by the want of religion in those she loved.—'This too I must leave to Him who can alone change their hearts,' sighed she, as she bent her knees to pray for them. Elizabeth, however, seemed more thoughtful, and this filled her heart with gratitude.

When Catharine had remained about an hour alone, she was interrupted by Helen Graham knocking softly at her door,—

'Will you admit me, dear Catharine?'

'Certainly, Helen.'



‘ You are displeased with me, Catharine—you looked much so as you left the drawing-room.’

‘ No, Helen ; I am only grieved.’

‘ My dear Catharine, I could not help laughing.’

‘ Oh, Helen, how childish ! but forgive me, I do not mean to offend you.’

‘ But you think me wrong, dear Catharine.’

‘ I do, dear Helen, most certainly think so. I think every one wrong who neglects the positive commandments of God, which you certainly do in trifling away the Sunday as you do. Surely your own conscience must reproach you. I must be very frank and plain with you, my own Helen. I do think you very wrong, but my thinking so is of very little consequence—this is not what I wish you to think of ——.’

‘ O I know what you wish me to think of,’ interrupted Helen —‘ and I promise I shall attempt to do as you wish. I cannot bear those grave looks,’ added she, the tears starting into her eyes.

Catharine embraced her, ‘ You will not repent doing so, my own dear Helen. Where is Elizabeth ?’

‘ She left the room just after you. I have not seen her since.

Catharine was pleased. She hoped Elizabeth had felt a desire to examine her heart in private, and she knew that this was a first and necessary step towards the knowledge of true religion. She went in search of her, and found her, as she wished, employing herself in reading and reflecting on what she read, with a desire to understand its meaning, and to judge her opinions and feelings by the Scriptures. Catharine remained long in conversation with this (next to Dunallan) dearest of friends.

‘ I have not forgotten your questions, my true friend,’ said Elizabeth, during their conversation ; ‘ they have not been absent from my thoughts half an hour since you asked them ; and they can be answered but in one way, and that completely condemns my neglect of religion hitherto. I am deeply sensible of this, and wish, my own Catharine, that you will be very plain with me in all you say on this subject.’

‘ Elizabeth, my dear first friend, you may trust me,’ replied Catharine with delight.



On the following morning, Catharine was again disappointed in receiving a letter from Dunallan, and the day passed heavily on. She could engage in nothing proposed by Elizabeth, and was at last obliged to confide to her the cause of her uneasiness. Elizabeth knew St Clair; and, though she considered Catharine's fears as going too far, yet did not regard them as altogether groundless; and by thus partly agreeing with her, succeeded in some degree in bringing Catharine to think as she did.

In the evening Mrs Oswald arrived, and so completely did she regard the very idea of Dunallan being led by any circumstances whatever into such a quarrel with St Clair, as would endanger his safety, as an impossibility, that Catharine felt assured, and in some degree at peace. Mrs Oswald, too, had twenty reasons to assign for his not writing; and when she left Catharine to go to her hotel for the night, Catharine had almost forgotten her apprehensions.

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

NEXT morning Catharine rose with her heart unusually light. She had, on first waking, implored the power to leave all her anxieties and fears with Him who guides the affairs of his people with unerring wisdom and love; and her prayer seemed to be granted.

The hour again passed, however, and there was no letter from Dunallan. She felt that this indeed tried her confidence in Heaven.

She joined Elizabeth and Melville. The latter seemed very grave, though he talked away in his usual manner. She observed that Elizabeth watched his countenance, and when she anxiously inquired if he was well, he turned away with an expression of so much uneasiness, although he attempted to laugh at Elizabeth's fears, that Catharine felt certain something had happened which he wished to conceal. Her heart began to beat violently. Elizabeth looked at her, then at Melville, and then exclaimed with a look of terror, 'Catharine! Philip! what



has happened? I see you both attempt to conceal something from me.' She rose and laid her hand on Melville's arm: 'do not conceal any thing from me, Philip—what! who is ill? Is my mother ——?'

Melville took her hand, 'Come with me, my Elizabeth; do not be alarmed.' He led her out of the room.

Catharine for a moment supposed that it was from Elizabeth that Melville had wished to conceal something; but soon her fears respecting Dunallan returned, and she hurried after them. They stood at a little distance from the door, Melville whispering to Elizabeth; but, on seeing Catharine, he drew her away.

'I see how it is, my friends!' exclaimed she, with forced calmness; do not be afraid to tell me—I am prepared—Oh my God have pity on me! He is not gone—say not this! Speak, Elizabeth ——.'

'No, my dearest Catharine; but be composed, my dear friend, and you shall know all.'

'I am composed, Elizabeth, tell me quickly, what is it? How? Why are you silent?'

Elizabeth led her back into the room.

'This letter is from Mr Clanmar, you shall read it yourself, Catharine.'

'From Clanmar! Oh merciful Father have pity! Is Dunallan unable to write? I cannot see, Elizabeth! Read it to me.'

Elizabeth did as she desired.

'It is with extreme pain, my dear Madam, that I sit down to inform you of an event which took place yesterday, in which my beloved friend, Lord Dunallan, received a wound which I fear will, at least, prove troublesome and tedious in recovering. His anxiety about Lady Dunallan will, I fear, increase the difficulty ——.'

Catharine started up: 'I will go to him, Elizabeth! Instantly I will go! Why should I delay a moment? He is my husband!'

'You shall do as you wish, dear Catharine. I will accompany you, for Mrs Oswald will not be able to travel so rapidly as you will wish to do.'

'You, Elizabeth! no, no, you ought not, my Elizabeth—you



shall not—I wish for no one to accompany me. Will you order every thing immediately for me, Mr Melville?’

‘I shall instantly, my dear Lady Dunallan, and myself accompany you.’

‘Oh! no, my too kind friends; give me this letter, Elizabeth.’ She hastily took it, and hurrying to her apartment, threw herself in an agony of grief and apprehension on her knees.

‘Oh! not this! not this! gracious, merciful Father! Oh spare him! save him!’ She sunk into fervent internal prayer. At last a feeling of trust in the mercy and compassion of Heaven, produced a burst of tears which relieved her heart. She trembled, however, on recollecting that she had herself, on the evening before, prayed that she might experience what that firm trust in the love of God was, which could support in the severest afflictions. She again poured out her soul in humble and fervent prayer. Some one at last knocked at her door; she started up, the door was gently opened, and Miss Morven entered. Catharine turned away.

‘I intrude, dear Lady Dunallan, but I come to ask a favour.’

Catharine turned to her; Miss Morven seemed greatly affected. ‘What can I do for you, Miss Morven?’ said Catharine in a gentle tone of voice. Miss Morven seemed unable to speak. She took Catharine’s hand in hers: ‘How soon are you called on, my dear Lady Dunallan, to experience the truth of what we heard yesterday?’

‘O Miss Morven, I cannot!—I shrink from it—I cannot—’ she shuddered, ‘but I must not think.’

‘But why anticipate more than is necessary?’ said Miss Morven.

‘How? I scarcely know what I anticipate; he cannot write! Oh! he would not easily have left that office to another. Here is the letter; but I tremble so, I cannot read it.’

Miss Morven took it, and read after where Elizabeth had stopped.

‘Lord Dunallan did nothing to provoke or expose himself to this outrage, for I can give it a no more honourable name. Mr St Clair’s violence of temper led him to forget all the feelings of a gentleman; and Lord Dunallan’s character, perfect as it was,



is still more exalted by his conduct on this occasion. I shall not speak of my own feelings farther than to say, that if the consciousness of the deepest obligations, returned for a time by the deepest ingratitude, which was most generously forgiven and forgotten, can bind the heart, mine will leave no possible means untried to preserve the precious life, which is now dearer to me than my own. Assure Lady Dunallan of this, my dear Madam, and as soon as it is possible, I entreat you to enable me to give my friend satisfactory accounts of this object of his deepest anxiety and solicitude.'

Catharine wept profusely, and Miss Morven wept with her. 'The favour that I have to ask of you, dear Lady Dunallan,' said Miss Morven, 'is leave to accompany you.'

'To accompany me! Oh no; why should I trouble and distress all my friends? Let me go alone, God will take care of me.'

'You will indeed distress your friends if you reject their attempts to lessen their own anxiety about you, dear Lady Dunallan. In asking leave to accompany you, I really ask a favour. I have a dear friend in London I wish much to see. I cannot go alone; will you consent to my going with you? Yes! you will.'

'You are too, too kind, Miss Morven; I know it is on my account your humanity leads you to ask this—but where is Mrs Oswald? Who is with her? To whom was this letter—was it not to her?'

'The letter is to Mrs Melville,' replied Miss Morven, looking at the address.

'And Mrs Oswald! exclaimed Catharine, 'she may not know; I must go immediately to her. We were to have set out to-day.'

At this moment Mrs Oswald entered the room. She was as pale as marble, but perfectly composed. On seeing Catharine, however, she was overcome, and burst into tears.

'Shall we not go immediately, Mrs Oswald?' asked Catharine, eagerly.

'Certainly, my love, instantly.'

'But, Mrs Oswald, I would not stop; you will allow me to proceed without stopping.'



‘We shall not stop, my love, if God gives us strength to go on.’

Martin was hurrying about making preparations, and Elizabeth also soon entered.

‘My Catharine, I shall now be at rest. Mrs Oswald is not afraid of being able to accompany you. Her children will remain with me.’

‘No! dear Mrs Melville,’ said Mrs Oswald, ‘the children must do as Dunallan wished. They will follow as soon as Mrs Scott can join them.’

Miss Morven entreated that she might be trusted to follow with the children, and it was at last so settled. Catharine then embraced her friend, ‘Elizabeth, fare you well. Martin, you must have done. Is the carriage ready, Elizabeth?’

‘It is.’

‘God bless you, my Elizabeth—pray for your friend—we may perhaps soon meet if, — yet I think—I hope I could not survive; but I am wrong—farewell, my own Elizabeth.’

Mrs Oswald was soon in the carriage.

‘I do not intrude myself,’ said Melville, as he placed Catharine by her; ‘I see my place far more properly filled; but I have sent a person to attend you, who will make such arrangements as will always enable you to proceed on every part of the road, when you wish to do so.’

‘Thank you, Mr Melville; that is what we most desire.’

The carriage drove rapidly away. For some time Mrs Oswald continued silent, and Catharine indulged those thoughts into which she dared not before to enter. At last she broke the silence,—‘was that letter from Mr Clanmar the only one which Elizabeth received, my dear Mrs Oswald?’ asked she; ‘were there no particulars?’

‘I have another letter, my dear, which Mrs Melville put into my hand—but I have not opened it—I scarcely know what I am doing—I cannot credit what I have heard.’

‘Oh give me the letter, dearest Mrs Oswald.’ She unfolded it, ‘but I cannot see the writing distinctly. Mrs Oswald again took the letter, and with some difficulty read as follows. (It was written by Mr Cameron, and addressed to Elizabeth.)



‘MADAM,

‘At last convinced that I have ignorantly been engaged in a very dishonourable action, in which that person’s happiness is involved, whom on earth I should most wish to render happy, I cannot leave the country, which my rash connection with Mr St Clair obliges me to do immediately, without attempting, by the only means in my power, to alleviate those sufferings, which I now know the danger of Lord Dunallan will create ; and this is by merely doing him justice, which, at this moment, I have it more in my power to do, than any other person, excepting St Clair. You, Madam, are not ignorant of my reasons for disliking, I believe I ought to say, hating, Lord Dunallan. I regarded him as the most selfish, cold-hearted, and hypocritical of human beings ; because I had seen him, while, at the same time he pretended to more than common strictness of principle, persist in completing the unhappiness of the most amiable of her sex. All that I afterwards learned of his character could not do away this impression. I was assured by St Clair that Lady Dunallan was miserable. I believed him ; and when, two evenings ago, Lord Dunallan called at Mr Clanmar’s, while I was there, every feeling of resentment and aversion resumed their influence so completely over me, that I felt disgusted with the conciliating mildness of his manners, and was insensible to the superior tone of his conversation, which seemed to arrest and charm the attention of every one else, the moment he began to speak.

‘I thought him consummate in art, and determined not to be duped. St Clair was one of the party at Clanmar’s. His manner to Lord Dunallan, the instant he appeared, was contemptuous, even to insolence. All he said was pointed at him, sometimes even grossly so, yet Lord Dunallan remained unprovoked. He treated St Clair with that mild dignity he so eminently possesses, and which makes those who attack him appear so little and contemptible. I felt provoked ; and, though St Clair’s mode of expressing his dislike was not exactly what I should have chosen, I attempted to support him. Lord Dunallan seemed more sensible to my remarks, and answered them with some warmth. St Clair was delighted to see him moved, and redoubled his attacks on every subject on which he thought



Lord Dunallan could feel sore, but without success. To him Lord Dunallan continued uniformly, but coldly, polite, and reserved. I again joined. He looked distressed, and Clanmar interposed, to smooth an irritation which seemed to threaten something more serious. At last a smile of pleasure brightened St Clair's countenance, as if some happy recollection had returned upon him. "I believe," said he, approaching Mrs Clanmar, near whom Lord Dunallan stood, "I believe you expressed a wish, Madam, to possess those lines I happened to repeat in your presence a few days ago. I have copied them, and hope you will be equally pleased with them on a second perusal." He stood close to Lord Dunallan, and opened up a paper. "O I am mistaken, this is only a letter." I was also standing near, and saw this letter was written in a hand I well knew. Had I not known it, I should have been at no loss, however, for St Clair had thrown it with apparent carelessness on the table, with the signature just under Lord Dunallan's eye, while he seemed to search for the poem. The writing was Lady Dunallan's ——.

Catharine could hear no further—she became as pale as death; and, in an agony, clasped her hands together, and exclaimed, 'And I am the cause! Rash, presumptuous folly! Oh Dunallan! How much am I to make you suffer?' She took the letter, and again attempted to read, but could not. She gave it back to Mrs Oswald, who, after hastily glancing at what followed, continued to read, while Catharine listened, pale, and almost overwhelmed with grief and self-reproach.

'I was not surprised at seeing this letter,' continued Cameron, 'for St Clair had mentioned to me having received a few lines from Lady Dunallan, respecting a favourite servant whom Lord Dunallan had dismissed. I immediately saw St Clair's purpose, which must have been premeditated. It had almost been defeated, however, for Lord Dunallan never looked at the letter, until Mrs Clanmar exclaimed, "What beautiful little female writing! May I look at it, Mr St Clair?"'

' "Certainly, Madam," replied he.

' "Look, my Lord!" continued Mrs Clanmar.

' He turned his eyes to the letter, and instantly became pale,



but held out his hand to receive it. St Clair would have snatched it from him, but he retired a step, and said, while he calmly folded it up, and looked sternly at St Clair, "This I will certainly not suffer. I know the subject of this letter, Mr St Clair, and the generosity to you which dictated it, although I knew of neither at the time it was written." He then put up the letter, and calmly resumed his place near Mrs Clanmar, though his countenance still expressed considerable emotion.

'St Clair's lip became pale, and his eyes flashed fire, but he remained silent. Clanmar advanced with a look of alarm. "Do not be alarmed, my friend," said Lord Dunallan. "I shall easily explain all this to you, and my conduct must be completely understood elsewhere already;" and for once he looked at St Clair with an expression of contempt.

'St Clair, however, instead of attempting to return this look, appeared quite confounded; and, after some ineffectual attempts to recover his composure, took leave. There were several people present, and I felt astonished at St Clair's looks and conduct. I soon followed him.

'“You have learned to bear insult with great magnanimity, St Clair,” said I.

'“I would bear any thing to save the reputation of Lady Dunallan,”’ replied he.

'Vile! Infamous St Clair!’ exclaimed Catharine. Mrs Oswald continued,

'“You must still befriend me, Cameron, and be with me when I meet, I hope for the last time, this arch-hypocrite.”

'I promised, and next morning carried his demand of an explanation to Lord Dunallan. I found him engaged with several gentlemen. He, however, guessed the nature of my business with him, and conducted me to another apartment. He read St Clair's note, then said, “Mr St Clair knows that I will not reply to this as he wishes. He is perfectly acquainted with my sentiments and principles on this subject.”

'“My Lord,” replied I, “he does know your avowed principles; but he very naturally thinks, that when one gentleman treats another as you chose to treat him last night, he must either intend to abandon such principles, or be willing to submit



to the inference the world must arrive at, when a man pleads strictness of principle to exempt him from giving satisfaction for an insult, which strictness of principle ought to have prevented."

"You are warm, Mr Cameron; pray do you know who was the writer of that letter which Mr St Clair so boastingly displayed?"

"I do, my Lord."

"And can you think there was any thing contrary to the strictest principle in my value for the delicacy of that person, even at the expense of insulting, call it if you please, the man who could so ungenerously attempt to wound it?"

"My Lord," replied I, hesitatingly, "I came not here as a judge—I only ——."

"But I wish you to judge, Mr Cameron, I wish to convince you, whose opinion I do value, that I am not wrong—that my principles may proceed from conviction, not pretence."

"My Lord," replied I, "it is of little consequence to me what your principles proceed from. I merely wish for an answer to my friend."

He seemed hurt. "You have my answer, Sir. Nothing, I trust, will ever induce me to meet any man, either to give or receive satisfaction in a way repugnant, equally, to the laws of God and of humanity."

"I immediately took my leave, and returned to St Clair. He did not seem at all surprised. "I expected this," said he, "but he shall meet me. He and I shall not both see another week."

"I left St Clair, but soon had a note from him, desiring me to meet him at seven o'clock on the following morning at —— Farm."

"I was at the place at the hour appointed, and found St Clair alone, anxiously awaiting my arrival. I asked him how he had induced Lord Dunallan to consent to meet him."

"He shall meet me!" replied he furiously. Another carriage soon arrived with Clanmar; and soon after another, which was stopped by a servant of St Clair, as it was proceeding past the place where we stood, and Lord Dunallan alighted and joined us.



‘He seemed surprised on seeing us.

‘“What has happened, Clanmar?” asked he, “Why am I sent for?”

‘St Clair, who had stood rather concealed by some bushes, approached.

‘“You are sent for, my Lord,” said he, with suppressed violence, “to give me an opportunity of clearing my honour from the stain you have attempted to fix upon it. Your scruples are now useless—the world will know you have met me, whatever happens.”

‘Lord Dunallan turned to Clanmar and me, “I declare to you,” said he, “I have been deceived. This note (showing it to us), is an invitation to be with a friend of mine who lives a few miles from town, at eight o’clock. I suppose, Sir,” turning to St Clair, “I need proceed no farther? This note, I presume, was written by you!”

‘“No, my Lord, you need proceed no farther. Clanmar is your friend. Here are pistols—take your choice.”

‘“Clanmar,” said Lord Dunallan, “I suppose you also came here without knowing for why?”

‘“I came here, Dunallan, because I had a message in your name asking me to meet you here.”

‘“Then, my friend, we may return together.” He turned towards his carriage. St Clair rushed before him.

‘“Never, Dunallan; we shall never part till you have given me the satisfaction I demand.”

‘“Madman!” exclaimed Lord Dunallan in anger; but instantly recovering himself, he turned to me, “Mr Cameron, you know my determination. Your friend is too violent to listen to me; but again I repeat it, nothing will induce me to do as he wishes.”

‘“He again turned to leave the ground, when St Clair, quite beside himself, held a pistol to his breast. “You shall not go—your cowardice shall not protect you.”

‘Lord Dunallan seized his arm, and wrenching the pistol from his hand, fired it in the air, and then threw it away. St Clair seized another. I caught his arm. “Are you mad, St Clair?” but it was too late. Lord Dunallan received its contents in his side, and fell.’



‘Thank God! thank God!’ exclaimed Mrs Oswald, clasping her hands together, and raising her eyes to Heaven, ‘Dunallan has not forsaken—he has nobly kept, the path of duty! Thanks be to God. O Catharine, what I have suffered for the last hour, in the dread that he had! Mr Melville said he had been wounded in an affair of honour,—your forebodings, Catharine. Dear, beloved Dunallan!’

‘Read on, Mrs Oswald, I entreat you,’ exclaimed Catharine. Mrs Oswald seemed a new creature. She wept, but proceeded.

‘When St Clair saw Lord Dunallan fall, he gave a horrid laugh, exclaiming, “It is done!” Then turning to me, said, “Cameron, why did you touch my arm?”’

‘Clanmar had raised Lord Dunallan. He seemed nearly fainting, but held out his hand to me.

“Cameron,” said he, speaking with great difficulty, “you are deceived. You know not the man you call your friend. Tell him, however, that I forgive him, as I hope my own soul will be forgiven. Tell him also, that if he consults his own safety, he will leave the country instantly, and as privately as possible. His servant, Lamont, was with me last night. I need say no more.” Lord Dunallan then fainted, from the exertion of speaking. One of his servants had gone in search of a surgeon, and soon returned with one from a neighbouring village. With his assistance we had Lord Dunallan carried to his house in London. On recovering from his faint, he seemed very uneasy on seeing me still near him. “Cameron,” said he, “you must not stay. You indeed seem unfit for such a business.”

‘I asked his forgiveness; “I have nothing to forgive,” replied he. “I never blamed you—you have been deceived. But you can do me an essential favour, Cameron,” added he. “The world will suppose I met St Clair for the purpose he wished. You cannot yet enter into the pain this idea gives me. I hope you one day will; but now, will you, as far as it is in your power, make the truth known? I do not mean you to criminate your friend. My wound was perhaps accidental.” He could say no more. I waited impatiently to hear the opinions of the medical gentlemen who examined the wound ——.’ Mrs Oswald read on to herself. ‘Go on, for Heaven’s sake, Mrs Oswald?’ ex-



claimed Catharine in terror. 'Let me know all. I am prepared for any thing.'

Mrs Oswald continued, 'Their opinion is, that the wound is dangerous, but they give hopes of his recovery, from the apparent strength of his constitution, and the known temperance of his habits.'

'Well,' exclaimed Catharine, clasping her hands together, 'then there still is hope!' She burst into tears, 'Oh my dear Mrs Oswald, I do not deserve this—I feel so rebellious to the will of God. I cannot be resigned to—I cannot even meet the thought.'

For a time Mrs Oswald could only weep with Catharine, but at length reproaching herself for her sinful unwillingness to acquiesce in an event which, in its every circumstance, had proved the strength of Dunallan's principles, and his complete change of heart and character, she attempted, from such considerations, also to soothe Catharine's agitated feelings; and in some degree succeeded.

'Yes; whatever happens,' said Catharine, 'those he leaves behind him will alone suffer. Death to Dunallan has no terrors. He looks for complete happiness only beyond the grave.' She became more calm and collected; and could think of his departure to another world; but internally and fervently prayed that, should this be the event, she at least might not survive him.

Two days passed on. The next would terminate their journey. Catharine had yielded to every wish of Mrs Oswald's except stopping on the road to sleep, and this Mrs Oswald had not urged till the last day. She then entreated her to stop for a few hours.

'We shall arrive exhausted, my Catharine. You will be unable to meet any exertion with composure. You will be unable—.'

'If he still lives, my dear Mrs Oswald,' interrupted Catharine, 'and we are unable to command our feelings without rest, we can take it when we arrive. If he has left us, I wish for no strength to bear it.'

Mrs Oswald did not attempt to answer.

'You think me wrong, dear Mrs Oswald, but bear with me



for a little. I hope God too will forgive me ; but if I stop at this moment, I think my reason would be the sacrifice.'

'You shall not stop, my love—but recollect yourself, dear Catharine. You will not be tried beyond the strength you will receive to bear the trial. Attempt to trust in this, my love.'

'I do—I attempt it—but I feel so hurried and confused. Do not speak to me, dear Mrs Oswald.'

Mrs Oswald put her arms around her, and supported her head on her bosom ; and worn out with fatigue and misery, she soon fell into a disturbed slumber, which gradually became more tranquil, till at last she really slept. Mrs Oswald bent over her with feelings of the deepest anxiety. Catharine's young and lovely countenance already betrayed the power of the miserable and anxious state of her feelings. Her pale cheek, parched lips, and deeply sad expression even in sleep, filled Mrs Oswald with alarm. She continued to sleep until awakened by the rattling of the carriage on the pavement as they entered the suburbs of London. She started up.

'Where are we ?'

'My love, we are near the end of our journey.'

'Thank God.' Mrs Oswald remained silent while Catharine raised her heart to Heaven imploring support.

The streets crowded with people and carriages, seemed endless.

'And this is London !' said Catharine, 'and here I once thought all was pleasure. How gloomy it looks ! how large ! How much misery it must contain ! Are we still distant from — square ?'

'Yes, still two or three miles.'

Catharine remained silent, but quite composed. The carriage drove rapidly on. At last an attendant who had rode forward was now seen returning. The carriage stopt.

'My Lord is considered better to-day,' said the man joyfully, and the carriage immediately proceeded as rapidly as possible. Mrs Oswald audibly returned thanks to Heaven. Catharine became faint for a moment, but was soon relieved by tears. She took Mrs Oswald's hand, 'God has had pity on me, dear Mrs Oswald ; He has heard my prayers, evil and rebellious as I am.'



The carriage at last stopt ; Clanmar and his amiable wife received Mrs Oswald and Catharine at the door of the house.

‘Lord Dunallan is better to-day,’ said Mrs Clanmar immediately, and embracing Catharine.

‘Is he considered out of danger?’ asked Mrs Oswald, eagerly.

Mrs Clanmar was silent, and looked at her husband.

‘Tell us the truth, Mr Clanmar,’ said Catharine, faintly.

‘Your arrival, Madam, will, I hope, hasten his recovery. His anxiety on your account has increased the danger of fever, which is the thing most to be dreaded.’

‘He cannot know of our arrival, Mrs Clanmar,’ said Catharine, leading her aside. ‘Does he expect us? When may we see him?’

‘He did not expect you for several days still,’ replied Mrs Clanmar. ‘When your servant arrived about half an hour ago, his physician was consulted whether he might be informed of your arrival. The physician said he certainly might ; and Mr Walderford is at this moment preparing him to see you. Whenever Mr Walderford returns, I am sure you will be allowed to go to him.’

Catharine listened impatiently for Walderford’s approach. At last he entered the room, accompanied by the physician.

‘Is Dunallan able to see us?’ asked Mrs Oswald immediately, ‘or ought we to delay?’

The physician replied in a cheerful tone of voice. ‘We did not know ourselves, Madam, that you were actually arrived ; we supposed you on the road ;’ then looking first at Catharine, and then at Mrs Oswald, ‘it depends entirely on yourselves, ladies, whether your presence may be of the greatest use or the contrary to Lord Dunallan.’

‘You may trust us, I believe, doctor,’ replied Catharine, attempting to appear composed.

He bowed. ‘What I mean, Madam, is, that emotion of any kind would, in Lord Dunallan’s present state, be highly injurious ; but I know I need say no more ; and the quiet which is absolutely necessary for him will be more perfectly secured by you than by any one else. If you please I shall now go with you to his apartment. Mr Walderford will precede us, and



when he has informed his Lordship that you are here, we shall leave you with him.'

Catharine assented; and, suppressing emotions, which at another time would have been too powerful for her, followed Walderford and Mrs Oswald to the apartment where Dunallan lay. They entered, and the doctor stopped them near the door. Catharine stood, scarcely daring to breathe. Dunallan's curtains were closed on the side next to her, and the room was dark, and sombre, and still. Walderford stepped softly to the other side. Catharine listened for Dunallan's voice, yet when he spoke, her emotion became so violent that she trembled in every limb, and her heart beat almost to suffocation. His voice was low and calm, but he seemed to speak with great difficulty.

'Walderford again! my kind friend.'

'I returned, Dunallan, to see what effect my last information had upon you. How do you feel, my friend?'

'Oh, Walderford, I find my heart is still sadly bound to life. When I think of Catharine, and this new proof of her affection for me, I shrink from death.' His voice changed as he spoke.

The physician approached. 'My dear Lord Dunallan, you know I prescribe cheerful conversation.'

'I did not know you were present, doctor.'

'You must reserve your strength, my Lord, to converse with Lady Dunallan, and Mrs Oswald, who, I dare say, will not stop on the road.'

'Oh, I trust they will,' replied Dunallan, earnestly.

'Are you prepared to meet Lady Dunallan, my Lord? You have commanded me to tell you the truth. I again repeat that your recovery depends on your avoiding all emotion.'

'I am prepared to attempt following all your prescriptions, doctor; but my recovery, my dear Sir, depends on God.'

'Dear Dunallan,' whispered Mrs Oswald.

'My dear friend,' said Walderford, 'we wish to prepare you to see Lady Dunallan.'

'Well my friend, I am prepared. Catharine cannot be already come! Walderford, she is not here?'

'She is, Dunallan.'

'Heavenly Father, support us both,' prayed Dunallan fervently.



Catharine, as she now approached, pale but composed, breathed the same prayer.

‘No emotion,’ whispered the doctor, as with Walderford he passed to quit the room.

‘My Catharine! my aunt! Oh you have been too, too kind. You have travelled too rapidly,’ said Dunallan, as they approached.

‘No, no, dear Dunallan,’ said Mrs Oswald; ‘we have received the strength we required. Do not think of us.’ Catharine could not speak, nor did she venture to raise her eyes to Dunallan’s face; but taking the hand he had held out to her, she pressed her forehead upon it, and in vain attempted to suppress her tears.

‘My love—my dearest, kindest, Catharine,’ said Dunallan, ‘how shall I express my gratitude to you?’

‘Dunallan,’ replied Catharine, struggling to suppress her feelings, ‘you must say nothing kind to me. We must excite no emotion. Forget, Dunallan, that I am any thing but your nurse.’

‘But, my Catharine, my aunt, why have you travelled so rapidly? Who attended you? Who suffered you? Have you never stopped?’

Catharine looked up to reply to Dunallan’s questions, but on seeing his altered looks, was unable to proceed. Dunallan smiled. ‘Do not be alarmed, my Catharine. Loss of blood makes one always look dreadfully ill. That is all, my love. I do not suffer much.’

Catharine burst into tears, and turned away to conceal them. Dunallan held her hand. ‘My Catharine, we must find courage to see things as they are. We must venture to look to the future. Do not struggle thus to suppress your feelings.’

‘Oh, Dunallan, do not exhaust yourself thus!’ exclaimed Catharine, in a voice of agony, as he spoke with extreme difficulty. ‘I entreat you seek repose. Mrs Oswald and I shall watch by you.’

‘No, my Catharine, you and my aunt must need repose. I must now send you from me. Those pale looks distress me. Leave me to Walderford. When you have rested, and return



to me, I shall have many things to say to you, which ought to be said while I am able.'

Catharine started.

'My love, you must know the truth. I am not yet out of danger. There is still either another ball, or some fragment of my dress in the wound, and until that is extracted I cannot recover. This will be attempted as soon as I am thought in a state to bear it—perhaps to-morrow. It will not be painful, my love,' added Dunallan, on observing that Catharine shuddered, 'but it may not succeed. I therefore wish to say all I ought to say to you as soon as we have had repose. Let us all, for each other's sakes, really seek that repose.'

Dunallan became himself affected deeply; and Catharine, unable longer to suppress her feelings, clasped his hand in agony for a moment, and then hurried from him. Dunallan entreated his aunt immediately to follow her.

'Oh, Mrs Oswald!' exclaimed Catharine, 'he is ill—ill indeed;' and instantly fainted.

On recovering she found herself in bed, and Mrs Oswald and Mrs Clanmar hanging anxiously over her.

'My kind friends,' said she, 'How I plague you all. Mrs Oswald, you must not stay with me. You need rest. You have promised to seek it.'

'Yes, dear Catharine, let us both really seek *that rest*, both for body and soul, which will fit us for whatever is before us.'

Catharine embraced Mrs Oswald. 'Leave me then, dearest Madam, and I shall truly attempt to do so. After this nothing shall separate me from him, I hope for ever.'

Catharine's friends willingly consented to leave her; but when alone, Dunallan's countenance was again before her,—so languid, so heavenly the expression, as he lay unable to move from pain and weakness. 'He cannot recover,' thought she, giving way to the anguish she had struggled to suppress in his presence. She thought with terror of what he might yet have to suffer. She could find no hope, no refuge, no rest, but in prayer. She fervently implored resignation to the Divine will—and for power to overcome her selfish feelings, and to be a support and comfort to Dunallan, whatever might be the event, instead of a source of



anxiety and grief. Her thoughts became elevated as she prayed. The nothingness of the things of time, compared with those of eternity, appeared so clearly as almost to surprise her. She almost longed to depart—to be taken with Dunallan. But was she prepared for this? She trembled as the thought struck her, that love for a fellow-creature led her to desire to die. She prayed with fervour that her heart might be delivered from such earthliness, and devoted supremely to its Creator, so as to love Him above all human love,—and something seemed to whisper that Dunallan's death must be the means.

After many tears, and much humiliation of heart, she at length could from her heart say, 'Thy will be done,' and from that moment felt in some measure calm and collected, and resigned, and soon sunk into that repose she had promised to seek.

It was early next morning when Catharine awoke. She instantly rose; and, after fervently asking for help from Heaven, left her room to go in search of some one from whom she might hear of Dunallan. She met Mrs Oswald on the stairs. 'I was coming to you, Catharine.'

'You have seen Dunallan, dear Mrs Oswald?'

'Yes, my love, I have just been with him. He has slept, and is, I think, less uneasy this morning. He will not allow me to mention the word suffering to him. He says he has cause only for thankfulness.'

'Dear Dunallan!' said Catharine, her eyes filling.

'You, my love, must now be his nurse, his constant nurse. He has received my promise that I shall devote my time and cares to the wretched Harcourt.'

'Harcourt,' repeated Catharine, 'I had forgotten his existence. Is he not in this house?'

'He is, my love, and a source of the deepest anxiety to Dunallan. He is very ill, in the last stage of consumption, but his mind, Mr Walderford tells Dunallan, is as vividly acute, and as dark and miserable as ever. Dunallan will not give up attempting to enlighten this darkness, and has proved to me that I ought to leave him to the care of the many friends Heaven has bestowed upon him, and devote my every moment to watch over, and attempt every means in my power, while life remains, to



bring this forsaken, wretched, but immortal being, to the hope of Christianity. But now, my love, let us return to Dunallan's room, and I shall show you the arrangements I have been making.'

Catharine then followed Mrs Oswald, who softly entered a small apartment, one door of which opened into the room where Dunallan lay. The arrangements in this outer apartment proved how well Mrs Oswald had been accustomed to sickness. Nothing seemed to be forgotten that could possibly be wanted. Mrs Oswald softly opened the door into Dunallan's apartment. Catharine followed. His attendant retired on their approach, and Mrs Oswald motioned to Catharine to take his place. Dunallan again slept; and Mrs Oswald, after watching his slumber for some minutes, whispered to Catharine, 'I am certain he is better. I see no cause of alarm here. Now, my love, I leave him to you. Remember, composure and cheerfulness are the best qualities of a nurse.' She kissed Catharine's cheek and then softly stole away.

Catharine continued to watch her patient, scarcely daring to move or to breathe lest she should disturb him; but attempting to raise her thoughts, and to rest her trust in heaven.

Dunallan's sleep at last became disturbed, and an expression of pain for a moment contracted his brow. Catharine rose hastily, and bent anxiously over him. It passed away, and his countenance again resumed its heavenly mildness of expression. Soon, however, it was again disturbed, and, attempting to move, he awoke. He started on seeing Catharine, and a flush of pleasure crossed his brow.

'You are in pain, Dunallan.'

'No! my Catharine; at this moment I only feel pleasure. Have you, my love, had repose?'

'Oh yes? and now, Dunallan, I am to be your constant nurse, and neither of us must think of any thing but your getting well. At this moment I prescribe more repose. It was pain which awoke you.' She arranged the pillows which supported him, while he looked at her with an expression of melancholy pleasure.

'What ease you have given me, my beloved nurse!'



‘You must remember we are to avoid all emotion, Dunallan.’

‘Yes, dearest Catharine, if possible : but, while I have strength, I must say what I wish to you.’

‘Say those wishes in one word, then, dear Dunallan.’

‘I shall, my Catharine. I still think I may recover ; but, should I not, I must leave you, Catharine, without an earthly protector, but your own prudence. This thought is almost insupportable to me, but in this I am wrong, and I hope I have at last been enabled to leave you to his Almighty care in whom I hope you trust. Beware, my Catharine, of St Clair. He is a desperate character. There is, I fear, nothing of which he is not capable. I dare scarcely think of what you may be exposed to, from his violent and selfish attachment to you.’

‘Do not fear, my dear Dunallan,’ interrupted Catharine, ‘we shall not be separated. I shall need no protector. God will hear my prayers. Do not seek to prepare me for an existence I could not endure for a day. I feel it, Dunallan—we shall not be separated!’ She spoke with a melancholy energy, which almost overcame Dunallan. He, however, struggled to regain composure, and proceeded :—

‘I shall not dispute this with you, my Catharine, but you may be mistaken ; and, if so, you will have a melancholy pleasure in remembering your friend’s last wishes.’

Catharine could not suppress her tears, and bent down her head to conceal them ; while Dunallan proceeded to inform her of his wishes respecting herself—respecting Mrs Oswald and the children—respecting his people at Arnmore.

‘I have been unable to assist you by writing any explanation of my views, but I believe you will be able to comprehend from my papers all that is necessary. All the influence that was committed to us, with regard to these people, is now left to you, my Catharine ; all is now yours ; you have much in your power ; much good ; remember this, my love. And now my beloved, too much beloved Catharine, there is still another thing I must say——God will not suffer idols. My own heart has been guilty before Him in this, but I will say no more. We must be taught to love Him more than each other, however painful the lesson.

‘And now, my Catharine, I have only to speak of myself. I



have but one other grief in leaving the world, besides that of being separated from those who are dearer to me than self—this grief is the appearance of my consenting to meet St Clair. This, I fear, may injure the cause of religion; but this is God's own cause, and I must leave it in his hands. Join your prayers with mine, my dear Catharine, that I may not be the unhappy means of bringing reflections on religion. I have now, my love, said all I wish, but this —— that my soul is in perfect peace. I have no fears as to the future—I find the truths I believed while death seemed at a distance, completely sufficient to support me in the immediate prospect of appearing before God; my confidence increases; my surety is sufficient. There is no condemnation to them who believe in Him for their whole salvation. My heart would still delay in this world for the sake of one idol, but I would be miserable even with that idol, were she to lead me to forget one duty to Him who gave his life to save us. I have prayed that our affections might be so regulated, that we might live and serve Him together; but I wish humbly to resign my will to his; I would say—separate us not, O God—let us together enter on our new state of existence—or together love Thee supremely, and seek to glorify Thee by our lives on earth.—But I know not what is best—I know not what He may see necessary, that He may purify us for himself.'

Dunallan stopped, greatly exhausted.

Catharine did not raise her head. Dunallan's last words had elevated her thoughts to Heaven, in earnest supplications for him and for herself, that they might be willing to submit to the will of God; that she might be enabled to overcome her sinful terror for what He should see fit to send, and be ready to receive every dispensation as immediately from the love of a father—the kind, merciful, discipline of a Saviour. She was greatly agitated, and sobbed aloud. Dunallan did not for a time interrupt her. At last, laying his hand gently on her head,—

'My Catharine,' said he, in a broken voice, 'our separation cannot be long, should it be necessary. Let us think of the eternity we shall enjoy together; time, my love, compared to that is nothing. Devote yourself, my Catharine, to more earnest preparation for that state; lay open your heart to your heavenly



Teacher—wait on Him till He moulds it to his will—till He moulds its affections and desires to rest in himself—and then even in this world you will be able to say, “that it was good for you to be afflicted.” And when we meet in another—Ah! Catharine, what will be my joy! How real that world appears to me at this moment!’

‘Oh, that I could do as you wish—that I could feel resigned to the will of God!’ exclaimed Catharine earnestly, and clasping Dunallan’s hand in hers.

‘He will regard your wish, my love,’ replied Dunallan, ‘and now, my Catharine, you must also be my soul’s nurse. I have been unable to read. Walderford has hitherto read to me—now, my love, I shall trust to you.’

‘But, Dunallan, you are fatigued, you must rest a little.’

‘I will, my sweet nurse; now you shall prescribe to me.’

Catharine seated herself by him while he remained silent, his eyes mildly fixed upon her. She watched every varying expression of his countenance. She changed his supporting pillows, so as to relieve the weariness of weakness, and the pain of his wound; and as he was able to listen, she read or repeated passages of Scripture calculated to carry the thoughts beyond death, and all that is on this side the grave. Her own mind became more calm, and resigned, and elevated.

The day passed away. The surgeon was to come again in the evening, and as the hour approached, Catharine began to listen eagerly to every footstep. At last he came, and Catharine retired while he dressed his patient’s wound. She watched for his leaving Dunallan’s room, and taking him apart, entreated him to tell her the whole truth.

‘My Lord has less fever to night, Madam. To-morrow I think we may examine the wound.’

‘I know what you mean, doctor; that will be painful and dangerous.’

‘I hope not, Madam. Lord Dunallan has an admirable constitution, and as for pain, in all my practice, I never saw any one endure it with such fortitude. His religion never forsakes him. He seems to find cause for gratitude even in pain. When



I ask if I make him suffer, he replies, smiling, "it is not you, doctor; it is a Physician of even deeper skill, but who cannot err." He always answers me in this kind of way.' Catharine's eyes filled with tears.

'But, doctor, in usual cases, would the examination you talk of be dangerous?'

'Not the examination, Madam, but the consequences. But, Madam, Lord Dunallan teaches us our duty. We shall use those means which appear proper to us, and leave the consequences with God. The future, Madam, is wisely concealed from us; present duty is plain.'

'True, doctor; you are perhaps right in not satisfying me. In the meantime you prescribe complete quiet.'

'Yes, Madam, for my Lord; and for yourself a whole night of repose. You will then, I think, be able for the fatigue which is before you. After to-morrow, undisturbed quiet will be absolutely necessary for Lord Dunallan. You, Madam, will be his most careful nurse.'

Catharine returned to Dunallan without trusting herself to think. The physician had not taken all hope away; yet his conversation, from its uncertainty, had left an unhappy impression. She could form no opinion regarding the future from what he had said, and she shrunk from the attempt.

Dunallan's languid eyes brightened with pleasure on Catharine's return. Walderford was with him, and rose to retire on her entrance.

'Do not go, Mr Walderford,' said she gently, 'Dunallan will regret my arrival, if I chase away all his friends.'

'Walderford is to be with me during the night, my dear Catharine,' said Dunallan. 'You look reproachfully at me. Do you think it possible I should recover, if I saw you worn out by attending on me? I have so many kind friends willing to be with me, that I hope I shall be able to manage so as to fatigue no one. Where is Clanmar, Walderford? I have not seen him since the morning.'

Walderford hesitated——'He is——there is an examination going on in some law court, which, I believe, he has been obliged to attend.'



Dunallan looked fixedly at his friend: 'Is St Clair concerned in that examination, Walderford?'

'St Clair has left the country,' replied Walderford, and then hastily left the room, saying he would return in an hour or two.

Dunallan became very thoughtful. Catharine held his hand in hers, and anxiously watched the darkening expression of his countenance.

'My dear Dunallan, may I ask what is the subject of your thoughts? I fear it is some painful one. Is it St Clair?'

'It is, my love.'

'But, Dunallan, should we not wish the truth in this horrid affair to be known?'

'Perhaps we ought; but, my love, were all the truth known, the consequences to St Clair would be more serious than either of us would choose to anticipate. Clanmar this morning asked to see the note which had induced me to go to —— farm on that morning I met St Clair. Will you, my Catharine, oblige me, by looking whether he replaced it in my writing case?'

Catharine searched in vain for the note.

'I see how it is!' exclaimed Dunallan with much emotion. 'I pray God that the unhappy St Clair may have indeed left the country.'

'My dear Dunallan, you will hurt yourself by this emotion. Why will you—why should you be so deeply interested about one who is so wicked—so horribly revengeful? I dare not think of him ——.'

'You must try to overcome those feelings, my Catharine, and from your heart forgive him. You do not know, my love, how much there is to dread. St Clair's servant came to me the night before I last saw him, and offered to make me acquainted with all the means used to intercept your letters. The man had formerly been my servant, and said his conscience would give him no rest for having been induced by bribery to injure me. At that time I felt unwilling to listen to him. I had just declined answering St Clair's challenge. I therefore assured the man of my forgiveness, on condition he would never, without my permission, mention the matter to any one. He left me,



however, muttering revenge against his master, for some personal ill treatment.'

'But now, my dear Dunallan, banish, I entreat you, this horrid subject from your thoughts.'

'No, my dearest Catharine; whatever is in our power we ought to do, and must do immediately, my love. Will you, my Catharine, go to Mrs Clanmar, and endeavour to discover every particular of this business for me? You must not consider me incapable of performing any duty while I live. I shall at least attempt it. It will not hurt me, dear Catharine. Miserable St Clair! I hope he is in safety somewhere out of the country.'

Catharine attempted to dissuade Dunallan from his purpose, but in vain.

'You are mistaken, dearest Catharine. It will not hurt me to know the truth. If I can do nothing, I shall be at rest; but I trust that *you*, my other self, my wife, will not deceive me.'

Catharine left Dunallan, intending to go immediately to Mrs Clanmar's house. She found, however, that both she and Mr Clanmar were at that moment engaged with Mrs Oswald. She immediately joined them. Walderford was also present, and the party stood close together, apparently in deep conversation.

'Mr Clanmar,' said Catharine, anxiously, 'has anything unpleasant happened? Dunallan is determined to know all. What *has* happened?'

'Nothing of any importance, my dear Madam. Do not be alarmed. I shall go and inform Dunallan of everything,' and he immediately left the room.

Catharine then entreated Mrs Oswald to tell her what had passed.

'You do not understand law matters any better than I do, my dear Catharine,' replied Mrs Oswald; 'but I shall tell you exactly what I understood Mr Clanmar to say. Mr St Clair's servant went two days ago to a magistrate, and offered to give some extraordinary information respecting the cause of the meeting between Dunallan and St Clair, which had been the wonder of the day, Mr Clanmar said, from Dunallan's known principles. From some things said by the servant, and also from some reports in circulation, orders were issued by the



proper authorities to search for and take into custody, Mr St Clair and Mr Cameron. The latter, who had not left the country, immediately gave himself up, and is at large on bail. St Clair has not been heard of. To-day, Mr Clanmar underwent an examination on the subject. Mr Cameron was also examined, and his evidence went greatly to criminate St Clair, who, however, is supposed by every one to have left the country; and this examination will, I trust, have no other consequence than that of clearing Dunallan's character. Indeed, Mr Clanmar says it has cleared it already; for, though the examination was called a private one, the court was crowded to excess. Am I correct, Mr Walderford?' asked Mrs Oswald.

'Perfectly so, Madam.'

'What would be the consequence, Mr Walderford,' asked Catharine, 'were Mr St Clair still in the country? for Dunallan is quite miserable, from the apprehension that he may not have escaped.'

'Were all the charges proved against him?' replied Walderford, 'Mr St Clair in intention is a murderer, and would be considered so in law.'

Catharine shuddered. 'Can Dunallan in any way lessen his appearance of guilt?'

'I think it impossible, Madam that he can. Mr Cameron, when on oath, said that he believed Mr St Clair intended to fire, and that he did not cause him to do so by touching his arm. Clanmar did not exactly see the transaction; neither, I suppose, could Dunallan.'

'Oh, I hope for Dunallan's sake, that he may indeed have escaped!' exclaimed Catharine; 'and may he never, never return,—horrid, wretched being! Do you really think he is gone, Mr Walderford?'

'Certainly, Madam, I believe: Oh, certainly, there can be no doubt of it,' added he.

Catharine, after spending a short time in conversation with Mrs Oswald, returned to Dunallan. He appeared very thoughtful.

'I have been right, Catharine.'

'Yes, Dunallan, but nothing is in your power. You promised



that if this was the case you would attempt to banish the subject from your thoughts.'

'I will make the attempt, at least now ——'

Clanmar left the room. Dunallan seemed greatly exhausted, and Catharine sat silently and anxiously by him for the next hour,—and then, after many entreaties on his part, left him to the care of Walderford and his own attendants. 'But this is the last time you must ask me to leave you, my friend,' said she, 'for I cannot again consent.'

Catharine retired to her apartment, wishing, if possible, to strengthen herself by repose for every exertion; and, struggling to banish every painful thought, she laid herself to sleep. For some time, however, the attempt was vain. At last tired nature overcame her harassed mind, as she sunk gradually into profound repose. Towards morning she dreamed she was at Arnmore. Dunallan was there also, and they together enjoyed the freshness of the opening spring. She saw its beautiful scenery, as she had seen it on her first arrival there, but she conversed with Dunallan as her friend and husband. She awoke, and could not, for a moment, recollect where she was, so deeply had she been absorbed in her delightful dream. The truth so painfully different, soon returned to her recollection, and her heart sickened at the contrast. She started from her pillow, and withdrew the curtain which screened her apartment from the rays of a clouded sun. She looked from the window, but instead of the luxuriant scenery of her dream, she saw only the miserable and stunted shrubs of a London garden. It was still early; but after seeking strength and consolation from Heaven, she determined to go to Dunallan. All was still in the house. She softly entered the room next Dunallan's. The door into his was half open. She approached cautiously. All was quiet. Mrs Oswald and Walderford were in the room. Mrs Oswald was seated with her back towards her. No light had yet been admitted into the apartment, but she read by the dim rays of a night lamp; and as she cautiously turned the leaf of her book, looked earnestly at Dunallan, then again began to read. Catharine saw that her patient slept, and earnestly prayed that his repose might continue, and be blessed. She softly retired from



the door, and seated herself near it, that she might watch his slumbers, and pray for him and for herself. His sleep continued. It seemed as if her prayers were heard. She felt a holy calm of soul, and knelt down to express her humble gratitude and trust. She continued on her knees—light and peace following her fervent supplications, and elevating her affections to the source of all good, of all purity, of all happiness. At last Dunallan spoke, and Catharine was instantly near him. She inquired with earnest tenderness how he had slept? How he felt? Dunallan's replies were even beyond her hopes, and she read in his countenance the ease and refreshment he said he had received from sleep. His own looks expressed the calm and elevated state of his feelings.

‘My friend,’ said Dunallan to Walderford, ‘you must not leave us, till you have expressed our gratitude to Heaven.’ Walderford immediately knelt down. Catharine and Mrs Oswald kneeled also, while Walderford poured forth in touching language, the very feelings and desires of their souls. When he rose from his knees, he took leave of Dunallan with almost a woman's softness. ‘You *must* allow me to be with you to-day, Dunallan.’

‘Well, my friend, you shall have your wish; but I require no earthly support, believe me.’

Catharine knew what Walderford alluded to, and when he was gone, expressed the satisfaction she felt in thinking he would be present.

‘It gives me only pain, my Catharine,’ said Dunallan; ‘yet I know were I in his place I should feel as he does, therefore I do not object, though I believe he will suffer more in supposing I suffer, than I really will. But this, my love, is one of the attendants of warm affections on this side the grave. A time is coming, my Catharine, when we may love and be loved, without fear of suffering, or excess, or change.’

‘Yes, my dear Dunallan; and I feel how selfish it is to be so unwilling to think *that* happy time may possibly be near for only one of us. Were it for both, O how I could welcome it!’

‘Could you my love? Have you no fears, no doubts, respecting the future?’



‘Ought I to have fears or doubts, Dunallan? Tell me truly. Do you think I deceive myself? Do you think I have not a right foundation of hope?’

‘I hope you have, my love—I trust you rest on the Rock of ages—the only refuge for any soul—but I feel anxious, my Catharine —— Love for me —— for any created good is not the motive which ought to excite your desires after another world. You would believe and feel this, my Catharine, were you, as I am, more certain of death than of life. Preparation for death, my love, must consist in such devoted love to our Divine Master, as would also be the best preparation for life, were He to will that. I speak plainly, my Catharine. If you knew how I love you, you would forgive me; even your sweet expressions of affection pain me, when they seem confused with what ought to be superior to all earthly affections. My Catharine, the human heart, even on this side the grave, is capable of feelings which no created being can inspire. Believe this; I say it from my own experience. You know I would not deceive you at such a moment. Should we be separated, my dearest of earthly beings, remember this.’

Dunallan became exhausted, but after a few moments pause, turned to Mrs Oswald. ‘My dear aunt, did you tell Harcourt my wish?’

‘I did, Dunallan, and he is impatient to agree to it.’

‘And you think he is able?’

‘Quite so; but, dear Dunallan, there is no change in Harcourt. He has, as yet, no power at times, over the horror of his feelings, and is still nearer the grave than when you saw him. Ought you, when perfect quiet has been prescribed, to expose yourself to the emotion he may excite?’

‘Dunallan, what are you going to do?’ asked Catharine, in alarm.

‘A plain duty, my love. I wish once more, while I have strength, to see Harcourt. After the examination of my wound I shall not be able, even if I should recover, till perhaps too late for him. It is possible he might listen to *one* perhaps as near death as himself.’

Catharine anxiously attempted to dissuade Dunallan from his



purpose, but without success; and Mrs Oswald left the room to assist in fulfilling his wishes.

‘Must we leave you with Mr Harcourt?’ asked Catharine, anxiously.

‘Yes, my love! I could not speak as I wish to him before witnesses,—and my Catharine, when you return to me, if I can find heart to do it, I shall try to chide you for joining even with my aunt in attempting to make me more careful about my own ease for an hour in this world, than about that of another’s soul during eternity.’

Dunallan’s servant and another attendant now entered, and softly placed a sofa near Dunallan’s bed, on which they arranged pillows for Harcourt. Catharine felt half afraid to see him, and now listened anxiously for his approach, while Dunallan seemed collecting his thoughts before meeting him. At last Mrs Oswald entered, and Catharine’s eyes were anxiously bent in the direction where Harcourt would appear. When he did, one glance at his countenance confirmed the fearful impression she had received of the awful gloom of his mind. Harcourt walked into the room, supported by two attendants. His tall figure was emaciated to the last degree—his face equally so. His eyes were hollow, and his features shrunk in the thinness of approaching death, while the expression of his countenance was so awfully serious, and his breathing, as the servants laid him on the sofa, so quick, and loud, and difficult, that Catharine watched in terror, expecting the last struggles of death. A pause of silence ensued, every eye fixed on the sufferer as he continued to struggle for breath, and to recover from the effects of exertion on exhausted nature. Dunallan’s looks were bent on him with an expression of the most painful anxiety and sympathy. Harcourt at last in some degree recovered, and his attendant retired.

Another silent pause ensued. It was broken by Dunallan.

‘I wished to see you once more, Harcourt.’

‘I too wished to see you, Dunallan,’ replied Harcourt, almost in a whisper.

‘I wished to know from yourself, Harcourt, whether you were more willing to meet a change of existence than when I last saw you.’



‘Willing!’ repeated Harcourt, in a voice that made Catharine start; it was so hollow, and proceeding from his death-like frame, seemed so unnaturally loud,—‘*willing*, to change hell in prospect, for hell in reality.’

‘Harcourt! why do you determine to indulge such horrible anticipations?’ replied Dunallan with much emotion. ‘You have the offer of heaven without one condition but that of humbling yourself to receive it. We are perhaps both on the verge of an eternal state, Harcourt, and ——’

‘*Eternal!*’ interrupted Harcourt, in a voice that made Catharine unconsciously shrink closer to Dunallan; ‘*eternal!*’ repeated he. The word seemed to have awakened ideas of extreme horror. ‘I once believed in an *eternal* sleep,’ continued he, ‘*now* I believe in an eternal, never to be satisfied searching for sleep. I am awake—vividly awake for ever. I cannot sleep now. I never more shall sleep! O for one single hour of dreamless sleep!’

Catharine was moved, for Harcourt’s voice had changed in uttering the last words, from a tone of horror, to one of despairing sadness. The state of his own feelings too seemed so overpowering, as to make him scarcely conscious of the presence of others, and she ventured to say, ‘It is that want of necessary sleep, Mr Harcourt, which makes the future appear so gloomy. One night of quiet repose would dispel all those horrors.’

‘And who denies me sleep?’ asked he, in the same despairing tone of voice. ‘They repeat words to me, and say they are the words of God; they tell me that the hairs of my head cannot become white or black without his permission; and then you speak of sleep—sleep, to one who would give a world for one night’s sleep, as if it was a thing of chance. If I cannot sleep, it is because God has decreed that I never more shall sleep.’

‘You cannot know, Harcourt, of any such decree,’ said Mrs Oswald, quickly, but gently. ‘You reject truth, and believe dreams of your own imagination.’

‘Is your story of the worm that never dies, the fire that is not quenched, a dream?’ asked Harcourt, with an expression of countenance and tone of voice that made Catharine shudder.

‘Leave us, dear Catharine,’ whispered Dunallan. ‘There is



no change here. You must not listen to him. I shall not attempt to say much, my love,' added he, on seeing that Catharine was unwilling to leave him. Mrs Oswald and Catharine then left the room, Harcourt scarcely seeming to observe their departure.

It was more than an hour before Mrs Oswald was informed that her patient had again been carried to his own apartment. Catharine immediately returned to Dunallan; she found him quite worn out. He held out his hand for hers.

'He has left me as dark and miserable as ever,' said he. 'He has only found additional grounds of despair in every thing I have attempted to say. Offers of mercy, the most touching, he listens to as a stone; while his soul seems fearfully alive to every word which can awaken ideas of rejection and condemnation.'

Dunallan seemed greatly overcome, and for the next hour yielded to Catharine's anxious entreaties to seek repose, while she in silence watched by him. He then seemed in some degree recovered, and again began to converse with Catharine, and as he ever did, succeeded in leading her to give expression to her inmost thoughts, and thus, if painful, as they now were, almost stealing away their bitterness.

Some one at last entered the room. It was the physician. Catharine became pale and faint.

'You are early, my dear Sir,' said Dunallan.

'It is my usual hour,' replied the doctor.

'Is it?' said Dunallan, then turning to Catharine, and smiling sadly, 'time has passed rapidly this morning.'

The physician felt his pulse.

'Well, Sir,' said Dunallan, 'are you satisfied?'

'Quite so, my Lord. It is even more favourable than I expected. Will you admit my brethren?'

'When you please.'

'I shall return immediately then,' said the doctor, adding cheerfully, while he looked with much interest at Catharine: 'we shall soon again, Madam, require your cares. I hope every thing happy from them.'

He then left the room.



‘I shall not suffer much, dear Catharine,’ said Dunallan, kissing her pale cheek as in agony she bent over him—‘indeed they will probably do nothing till the evening.’

Catharine trembled violently. She could not speak.

‘My beloved Catharine, I must ask you to leave me.’

‘Oh Dunallan! can I do nothing? must I leave you?’

‘You can pray for me, dearest Catharine, and that will support us both.’

Catharine heard steps approaching; she in anguish pressed Dunallan’s hand to her forehead, and hastened to another door as the doctors entered the room. She looked back for Walderford. He was there, looking so calm, that she felt more assured. She entered the apartment next to Dunallan’s; no one perceived her.

‘My dear Walderford,’ said Dunallan, ‘*must* you be present to see my side probed? You will suffer more than I shall—I wish you would consent ——’

‘Say no more, Dunallan, you must allow me.’

‘Well then, come and give me your kind breast for a pillow.’

Walderford supported him on his breast, and the surgeon prepared to uncover Dunallan’s wound. Catharine became faint, and could scarcely reach the door of the room. She found Mrs Cranmar and Mrs Oswald were waiting without, and fell lifeless into their arms. They conveyed her to an apartment distant from Dunallan’s, and Mrs Oswald used no other means to restore her to recollection, than laying her on a sofa, and opening a window. She almost wished she might continue insensible until the painful operation was over, and stood watching her lifeless countenance, herself almost as pale and motionless. Mrs Clanmar knelt by the sofa, her hands clasped together, and her eyes raised in supplication to Heaven. Catharine remained for a considerable time insensible. At last she began to show symptoms of returning life. On opening her eyes, and seeing Mrs Oswald bending over her, with looks of the deepest anxiety, she started up—‘where am I? what has happened?’ She looked dreadfully alarmed, but soon recollecting what had passed; ‘Oh! is it not over?’



‘It soon will now, I trust,’ said Mrs Oswald. ‘I shall return and tell you the moment it is.’ She left the room.

Mrs Clanmar still knelt—‘Oh! that is indeed right, my dear Mrs Clanmar!’ Catharine knelt down beside her; ‘we shall remain here.’ She covered her face, and in broken ejaculations supplicated Heaven in behalf of Dunallan.

‘Oh what a time they take!’ exclaimed she at last. ‘I must go.’ She started up—Mrs Clanmar gently detained her.

At length Mrs Oswald returned. ‘It is over quite safely, thank God. Another ball has been extracted.’

‘Thank Heaven! Horrid St Clair!’ exclaimed Catharine, raising her clasped hands to Heaven, and shuddering at the same moment.

‘May I now go to Dunallan?’

She had again become very pale. ‘Not quite yet, my dear Catharine,’ replied Mrs Oswald; ‘you must be very calm. I saw him. He seems greatly exhausted, and you must, my love, have perfect command of yourself.’

Catharine was sensible of this, and allowed Mrs Oswald to detain her for a few minutes, and listened to all she said; for Mrs Oswald’s self-denial and composure, but still more her deep piety, she always found greatly contributed to restore her self-command, and powers of thought. She then returned to Dunallan’s apartment. She softly entered through the ante-room. She found the doctor and Walderford still with him, but the curtains of his bed were all closely drawn, and the doctor made a sign to her on her entrance to be perfectly silent. She seated herself near Dunallan’s bed. For some time the doctor and Walderford remained quite still. Catharine listened, but could not perceive that Dunallan even breathed. After some time the doctor approached, and softly drew aside the curtain. Catharine started on seeing Dunallan, he looked so excessively pale and languid. He saw her, however, and smiled faintly. The doctor held something to his lips, which he with difficulty swallowed; and then, after looking for a moment at Catharine, and moving his lips as if to speak, he closed his eyes, and looked so gone, that Catharine’s terror was expressed by a countenance almost as pale. The doctor whispered to her that there was no



cause for alarm, and again resumed his seat. He looked constantly at his watch, and after each short interval, again and again administered restoratives to his patient, whose looks filled Catharine with apprehension.

The physician remained during the rest of the day, and great part of the night; he then gave up his charge to Catharine, who had eagerly inquired into the minutest of his prescriptions, and anxiously watched his method of treating his patient.

When she herself approached, and held a draught to his lips, Dunallan smiled, and an expression of pleasure, for a moment, brightened his eyes. 'I do not suffer,' said he, in a low voice. 'Thank God!' was all that Catharine allowed herself to say, in a voice as low. The doctor had entreated her to avoid all conversation for some time. Dunallan, whenever she approached him, wished to speak, but she persevered in imposing silence on him, and also on herself.

For several days Dunallan continued almost in the same state of weakness, and the doctor continued to evade all Catharine's importunate inquiries. She thought at last that both he and Mrs Oswald looked disappointed and alarmed, when they found Dunallan did not recover, and her strength began to sink under fatigue and constant apprehension.

One evening as she sat by him, Dunallan's sleep, which had been hitherto short and disturbed, became tranquil, and continued for several hours. Catharine was frightened,—because this was unusual. She stood leaning over him. His countenance was perfectly calm—there was almost a smile upon it, and he breathed quite easily. Catharine dared not disturb him by touching his arm to feel the pulse, in the strength or weakness of which she had become very skilful, but she could see, by the motion of the things around him, that it was stronger and more regular than usual. All she had heard of the short interval of strength, which is sometimes a prelude to death, returned at that moment to her recollection, and she bent over him, almost expecting to see him stop breathing,—and worn out in body and in mind, she scarcely felt any emotion. Dunallan's sleep, tranquil and profound, still continued for many hours. At last he awoke, just after the physician had softly



stolen into his apartment. Catharine watched his countenance as he felt Dunallan's pulse—it brightened.

‘Ah, here is a change indeed!’ exclaimed he. ‘I think, my Lord, you will now be forced to remain with us. Your pulse is as good as my own, or any man’s.’

Catharine nearly fainted. The physician supported her to a seat out of Dunallan's sight, and she was soon relieved by a burst of tears; and after yielding to them for a few moments, returned to Dunallan. He seemed absorbed in thought. His face was turned away, and his eyes raised to Heaven.

The physician approached, ‘My Lord, you are surprisingly recovered.’

Dunallan now perceived Catharine, and held out his hand for hers. ‘My Catharine, what a nurse you have been! Doctor, how could you suffer her thus to fatigue herself? She said it was by your directions, she would neither answer me nor listen to me when I spoke.’

‘Lady Dunallan will now converse with you, my Lord, and may also leave you to seek repose. There will no longer be any cause, I hope, for such close attendance.’

‘My own Catharine!’ exclaimed Dunallan, when the doctor had left the room, ‘You are pale and exhausted. How you have distressed me, my love! You must not stay another moment with me, but go to rest. When you return we may speak of the future.’

‘But Dunallan, I think you look sad; you are grieved to remain in this world. It is for my sake, my friend. I need a guide, a counsellor, and God has listened to my prayers.’

‘Ah no, Catharine. The doctor's favourable opinion has, on the contrary, made me too happy. I am most ungrateful—earthly ——!’ He burst into tears, and covering his face, was for a moment deeply agitated.

Catharine pressed his hand to her lips: ‘Are you thus grieved at my happiness, Dunallan?’

‘I am grieved at not being more anxious to leave this world and all it has to offer, for another, which, in my soul, I believe to be far preferable. I do not understand my own feelings, Catharine—leave me, my love—while I see that pale counte-



nance I can think of nothing else—that too dear—idolized countenance,’ added he. ‘When you return I shall perhaps comprehend myself.’

Catharine consented to leave him, and retired to a repose which was soon profound. She had been too much worn out to feel the full extent of her happiness; but her mind was now relieved from anxiety, and she was almost asleep before Martin had finished undressing her, and remained profoundly so for many hours. When at length she awoke, Martin was by her, and gave her the delightful intelligence that Dunallan was pronounced out of danger.

Catharine felt the most subduing sense of gratitude to Heaven, and once and again, before she left the room, returned to her knees to express it.

‘Do you yet comprehend yourself, my friend?’ said she, when again alone with Dunallan.

‘Too well, my dear Catharine. I now know something of the deceitfulness of the human heart; but it is better I should know it than remain deceived.’

‘May I ask how your heart has deceived you, Dunallan?’

‘Why, my dear Catharine, I had persuaded myself that I was really willing to die—that I did not wish to recover—that my will was not only resigned, but that I preferred the will of God, and the glorious prospects which open to a Christian in another state, to all that this world could offer me—even to you, my Catharine. Yet I was not disappointed—at least, only for a moment, when I felt returning strength. The pleasures of this world, so much better known, resumed their power to captivate. You, my Catharine,—my wife, so long only in name, now so sweetly returning my affection—ah, my love! I should be tempted to doubt the reality of my religion altogether, did I not feel that this world would be nothing to me without its hopes; and that, in my soul, I believe I should have been far happier had I died.’

‘My dear Dunallan,’ said Catharine, ‘it is not wrong to value the blessings of life when God bestows them on you. You once asked me to reprove you when I saw you valued them too highly. I shall try to remember this; but I think had you turned from



them with disgust and disappointment, you would also have been wrong. You were prepared to die, Dunallan; you will also be enabled so to live as to honour God in this world. You will find happiness in attempting this; and O! how happy shall I be in seconding your every wish to promote his glory, as far as shall be in our power.'

'Sweet preacher!' said Dunallan; 'you wish to reconcile me to myself. You will find it too easy. But now, my love, read to me. I cannot yet do so myself. You must assist me to direct my thoughts aright.'

Catharine read, while Dunallan continued still to listen. Her own heart was light and thankful. 'Shall I find any directions for the happy here?' said she, again opening the sacred volume. 'David's harp is often tuned to joy and praise.' She sung a few words in the joyfulness of her heart, then blushing, stopped.

'Do not stop, sweet nurse,' said Dunallan. 'Those words express the very feelings of my soul, and your voice is music to every feeling.'

Catharine again sung, but was soon interrupted by the entrance of Mrs Oswald. She hastened to meet and embrace her:—'Dearest Mrs Oswald, how kind, how self-denying you have been! Now you are rewarded!—Dunallan is spared to us!'

Mrs Oswald warmly, but silently, returned Catharine's embrace. She then tenderly embraced Dunallan, in vain attempting to suppress tears of joy and thankfulness.

'My dearest, kindest aunt?' exclaimed he, returning her embrace. He then inquired for her patient.

'He at last sleeps,' replied Mrs Oswald.

'What! is he gone?'

'Yes, about an hour ago.'

'And was there any change?'

'I trust there was.'

Dunallan was moved. 'Then, my dearest aunt, you are amply rewarded. Your efforts have been blessed, when all others failed. Walderford's unanswerable reasonings—Selwyn's instructions and prayers—my own attempts—How I rejoice that it has been so ordered.'



‘You are mistaken, dear Dunallan; all my efforts proved utterly ineffectual. Mr Walderford ceased not also to reason with poor Harcourt, but he had some answer against his own soul always ready. Your amiable and most Christian friend, Mr Selwyn, continued too, with the most anxious solicitude to place before him every offer of mercy and pardon; but, though he eagerly sought to converse with us, he listened to all we said, as if the power of admitting the ideas we presented to him was utterly gone; and we continued to use means, to join in praying for him, with scarcely a ray of hope remaining, when we were joined by two young preachers, from whom we certainly did not look for the effects which followed—our two little girls.’

‘The children!’ exclaimed Catharine.

‘Yes, my dear. I believe you scarcely heard me a few days ago, when I told you, as you anxiously watched your patient here, that Miss Morven and the children were arrived. Miss Morven had prepared them in the most judicious manner for their meeting with their father; and, when I took them to him, the little creatures seemed so full of concern, and approached with such a mixture of reverence and anxiety to please in their artless manner, that Harcourt at once saw, that they had been taught to feel for him as a father, and received them with much kindness and emotion. Their presence at first seemed to recal most painful recollections; but, after a time, he appeared less gloomy when they were with him, and seemed even to forget the future, while listening to their prattle, or following them with his eyes as they softly moved about in his room. “Can these happy, lovely, innocent creatures be mine?” said he, with some returning softness of feeling. The children showed so much concern too, when he was attacked by fits of coughing and breathlessness, that Harcourt was quite moved. After one of these attacks, little Mary had placed herself close by his sofa; and, putting her face coaxingly to his, she said, “Papa, you will soon be very, very good?”’

“I, Mary! How shall I be very good?”

“Because, Papa, God afflicts us to make us good.”

“Does He not afflict us, Mary, as a punishment for having been wicked?”



‘Harcourt looked for the child’s reply, as if it could have sealed his doom.

‘“But it is to make us give up being wicked Papa,” said Mary, “and if we confess that we have been wicked and come back to God, He will not punish us any more, but will love us when He sees us coming, and will come to meet us.”

‘“Come to meet us,” repeated Harcourt.

‘“Yes, Papa,” said Mary; “shall I read to you about that in the Bible?”

‘Harcourt allowed the child to do as she wished, and she brought her Bible, and seating herself close to him, she read the parable to which she had alluded. Harcourt listened earnestly, and the hardness and darkness which had withstood all our attempts, seemed to yield before this lowly means. When Mary came to that passage, “But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him,” she looked up and said, “Now, Papa, did I not tell you?”

‘Harcourt, I saw, was much overcome; but his glance towards me showed that he disliked being observed, and I immediately left the room. I did not return for a considerable time. When I did, the children were both close by him, and I saw that he had been shedding tears; and when the children afterwards left him, I observed that he had kept their Bible. During that, and the day following, he often read it at times while he was able, and the two following nights he enjoyed some hours of tranquil sleep. He spoke little to any one for the last few days, but his looks and manner were entirely changed. He was, however, most anxious to secure the certainty of his children being left entirely under your guardianship, Dunallan, and was assisted by Mr Walderford to do all that was in his power to secure this, lest his own relations should ever attempt to interfere. He warmly thanked us all for our cares and patience with him; and his last words to me, were, “Tell Dunallan that I die in the hope of the thief on the cross.”

For several succeeding days, Catharine continued to devote her every moment to Dunallan. She read to him, or conversed with him, or sung, or sought by her gentle and playful gaiety to



amuse him, and every day seemed to discover some new way of charming or interesting. During these days, Walderford had performed the last duties to poor Harcourt, and Mrs Oswald had set out with the children, on their return to Scotland.

Dunallan continued to recover rapidly, though still too weak to leave his room. Catharine's joy was expressed in her animated looks, her light step, and sweetly playful manners.

'The Doctor says you may now admit one or two friends, Dunallan,' said she one day, 'and such crowds are desirous of seeing you, that I suppose if they are admitted two at a time, they will last at least for a month.'

Dunallan smiled, but did not seem greatly to enjoy this permission. 'I shall, I fear, have reason to regret my being so far recovered, my Catharine. Those friends, kind as they are, will not supply the place of my nurse to me.'

'And is she to be banished when they come?'

'Will she not wish to banish herself? Will not Miss Morven demand her attention, and Mrs Clanmar? But I am very selfish, or I would wish you to escape from a sick-room, which you have made to be the sweetest place I ever inhabited.'

'Perhaps, since you say so,' replied Catharine playfully, though blushing deeply, 'this will be the proper time to make you confess that you believe I always felt as I ought for you—always wrote as I ought ——.'

'No, no, Catharine, your own test was the affection of a wife, not the compassionate kindness of a nurse. In that you are perfect. I shall not easily think you so in the other.'

'Unreasonable distinctions,' exclaimed Catharine, blushing again. 'I think I must show you how a nurse, who is not a wife, would treat you—so now which of your friends will you admit this evening to relieve me from my cares?'

'I cannot tell—but, Catharine, do you conceal it from me, or do you really hear nothing of St Clair?'

'Nothing, Dunallan. I hope I never shall.'

'My Catharine, you are wrong in this, you must forgive him.'

'I do forgive him, I hope: but must I wish to hear of, or take any interest in, the horrid being, who, in intention, was



your murderer, Dunallan?' A message from Walderford at this moment, requested admission.

Walderford had spent many anxious hours by Dunallan during his illness, and his natural reserve had, with Catharine, entirely worn off. She felt for him as for a brother, and now cordially welcomed him.

'Mr Walderford will be able to answer all your inquiries, Dunallan,' said she on his entrance.

'Can you, Walderford, tell me any thing of St Clair?' asked Dunallan.

Walderford hesitated.

'I see you can,' resumed Dunallan; 'I entreat you to tell me without reserve all you know. Has he left the country?'

'No. He was arrested at —, and is now in confinement. He must be tried.'

'But on what grounds?'

'There are several charges against him. After the morning on which you met, he continued for some time in concealment, I know not where, and was at last discovered by a servant who had been bribed by him, it appears, to stop letters at some post-office on the coast. This fellow had repented, and had determined to leave St Clair's service before that morning. St Clair, however, had believed him faithful; and when the servant went to him one day lately, and boldly declared his determination to appear against him, should he remain in this country, and confess the whole business respecting the letters, and also the means which had been taken to bring about the meeting at — Farm, St Clair, already fretted almost to madness (by the necessity of his skulking about in concealment—a necessity so galling to his arrogant spirit—and also by the reports in circulation respecting the duel), became so exasperated, as to repeatedly and violently strike the man, and then push him out of the room with such force as to throw him down stairs, by which he was seriously hurt. St Clair made no attempt to escape, but when the people crowded in to secure him, he defended himself with the desperate bravery, or rather fury of a madman. This assault is one charge—stopping the letters another—the duel a third; but I think it likely nothing serious



will be proved against him. The note which brought you to — Farm was so artfully written that it can do him no harm.'

'I sincerely hope not,' said Dunallan, with much concern. 'When does his trial come on?'

'I do not know. His friends, I fear, will injure him by their many attempts to interest men in power in his behalf. They only call the attention of the public to the business, which is a very dishonourable one for him.'

'Is it said whose those letters were which he stopped?' asked Dunallan.

'No, but that will probably appear on the trial.'

Catharine became very pale: 'Will the letters appear?' asked she, trembling.

'I think he has probably destroyed them,' replied Walderford. 'Are you, Madam, at all interested in their appearing?' asked he, anxiously.

'I will surprise you, my friend, when I tell you,' said Dunallan, 'that those letters were Catharine's and my own; and that St Clair at that time had almost, indeed did succeed, in making me believe that Catharine detested me. You never before knew, Walderford, what it was that hastened my return home. It was the contents of the letters forwarded to me, I believe by St Clair, instead of those really written by Catharine.'

'Then,' exclaimed Walderford, 'I from my soul wish this villany may be proved against him. He is unfit to die—therefore, I hope nothing more serious than this may be proved—but may he spend the next ten years in banishment!'

'Oh no,' said Dunallan, 'I cannot wish that.'

'His character will be gone for ever,' said Walderford; 'his country can have no charms for him.'

'Unhappy St Clair!' exclaimed Dunallan, with much feeling.

'You surprise me by the interest you take in that vile St Clair, my dear Dunallan,' said Catharine; 'surely disgrace is a very just punishment for a man who has stooped to such meanness; and too slight for one who, in the sight of Heaven, is a murderer.'

'I do feel deeply for him, my dear Catharine, because I can judge from experience, to what dreadful forgetfulness of all that



is most honourable or sacred we may be led by the indulgence of strong passions. From my soul I lament the fate of St Clair.'

'But dishonourable mean actions, Dunallan!—passion never could have bent your soul to them.'

'Do you think violating my promise to a dying friend less base, Catharine?'

'But you did not violate that promise, Dunallan.'

'In intention I did; circumstances interposed and saved me; for these I humbly thank God. In myself I was completely lost—subdued by passions, which I now recollect with too keen remorse to suffer me to feel any thing but pity for a wretched being under their influence. Have you seen St Clair, my dear Walderford?'

'I have. He sent for me to ask some questions respecting you. He wished, he said, to know the truth. I told him you were recovering. He asked how many balls had been extracted from your side. I said two, without making any remark. He smiled bitterly, "I did not wish either of us to survive," said he, "at least not him." I attempted to reason with him on his injustice: but he said our ideas of justice did not, nor ever would agree. He thought the principles I professed as well as you, the meanest on the face of the earth. They condemned, he said, every virtue that in his opinion constituted the character of a man, and exalted into virtues whatever was abject and mean; "and the unaccountable, diabolical thing is," added he, almost with fury, "that those who profess them, after using the most heartless persevering meanness to attain their ends, succeed in convincing their unhappy dupes that they are saints and angels; and with their hypocritical jargon confuse and subdue those minds, which are too modest—too amiable—too gentle—too enthusiastically good, to condemn what they imagine must be right, since practised by such religious people."'

'I know to what he alludes,' said Dunallan, 'and unhappily I have given him cause for part of what he says.'

'You! Dunallan,' said Catharine tenderly, 'how you condemn yourself!'

'Perhaps, my love,' replied he, 'you would have been of St Clair's opinion had he expressed it during the first month of our



acquaintance. You see, my Catharine, how spotless the life of a Christian must be. I *was* a criminal in making the promise I did to my dying father.'

'I attempted,' continued Walderford, 'to separate what you, my friend, yourself allowed to be wrong in your conduct (for he soon began to talk on that subject), and the perfect blamelessness of your general character, and wished to convince him that affection at least could never be won by an affectation of religion; but he would not listen to me. On one subject he appears to me nearly deranged.'

'On what subject, my friend?'

Walderford looked at Catharine.

'I understand you, Walderford; you mean the possibility of my having inspired affection here,' looking also at Catharine, who sat by the sofa on which he reclined.

'And that is his affection for me!' exclaimed Catharine, 'about which he has said so much, and which he thinks an excuse for so many crimes. He wishes me to hate the man to whom I am indissolubly united. Oh what perversion of language and of truth! It is self, self alone he loves; and disappointed pride, and jealous hatred, have instigated him to all he has done.'

'Certainly, Madam,' said Walderford, 'his present feelings deserve no better name than selfishness.'

---

## CHAPTER XXII.

For several days nothing more was heard of St Clair. Dunallan, since he had been permitted by his physician, had seen many of his friends; and Catharine, to whom most of them were strangers, often left him, to spend an hour or two with Mrs Clanmar or Miss Morven. Every hour, however, in which she was absent from Dunallan, seemed immeasurably tedious, even when spent with Miss Morven; and greatly more so when spent with Mrs Clanmar. In this, however, Catharine felt herself ungrateful and selfish; for Mrs Clanmar, during Dunallan's



illness, had been unweariedly kind and attentive, while she seemed herself to expect no attention, and to be unboundedly grateful for the least proof of kindness. She had scarcely an acquaintance in London. Clanmar sought his society and pleasures away from home, while she devoted herself to her little boy, and thought it kind if Clanmar spent a day with her. Miss Morven's arrival in London had been almost a new era in Mrs Clanmar's life. She spent part of every day with her. At first she had done so that she might hear of Catharine, but she afterwards became every day more deeply interested in this amiable and almost deserted young foreigner. Mrs Clanmar loved Miss Morven with enthusiasm, and Catharine no less. Their kindness drew forth those powers a stranger would not have believed she possessed, obscured as they were by her broken language, and humble deference to every one's opinion in preference to her own. Miss Morven and Catharine were surprised to find that this gentle and lowly young creature had found, or rather had been taught by Heaven, and by her misfortunes, to seek her happiness from that pure and exalted source which can never fail or disappoint. Without instruction, except from her Bible, and without knowing what meaning others gave to the sacred volume, she had understood it for herself in the very same way in which they did; but she knew it better, for she valued it more. She wept with joy and gratitude to Heaven, when she found they understood her, and felt as she did. This was a new bond which led to feelings more dear and intimate than those of sisters, and Catharine reproached her heart for its selfishness, when she found that while Mrs Clanmar was enjoying a pleasure in her society which seemed to restore her to new life and animation, her own thoughts continually returned to Dunallan, and the time seemed long to her, which to her solitary young friend seemed so short; and that though she joined in the interest Miss Morven felt in this gentle creature, yet, when with her, her thoughts were only occasionally present.

One evening, on which Clanmar had promised to see Dunallan, Catharine determined to devote entirely to Mrs Clanmar. Miss Morven she knew was engaged, and she felt pleased at having an opportunity of conversing quite freely. Mrs Clanmar



had often appeared anxious for such conversation with her, but had been always prevented; yet not before she had said enough to convince Catharine that there was some secret cause of uneasiness she wished to reveal to her.

On this evening Clanmar appeared as he had promised. Catharine was with Dunallan when he sent to ask admittance.

‘I must talk a long time with him, dearest Catharine,’ said Dunallan, ‘how will you spend your evening? You see how vain you make me by your constant goodness to me. I think you will feel the time long without having your poor patient every moment to soothe, and instruct, and charm!’

‘Instruct! Dunallan,’ replied Catharine, ‘you certainly are greatly indebted to me for that part of my care!’

‘Yes, my dear nurse, you have guessed the state of my mind and feelings with wonderful exactness. You know you have yourself generally chosen whatever you have read to me. You, and this wound, my sweet friend, have taught me much I shall never forget, both of myself and of my dearer self.’

Clanmar entered. He blushed on seeing Dunallan.

‘You have thought me negligent, my friend. Lady Dunallan, I fear you blame me, but I have been so harassed with business, I ——.’

‘No more excuses, dear Clanmar,’ interrupted Dunallan gaily, ‘I have been too happy in a nurse ever to feel neglected; and I know too well your attentive kindness, while I was in any danger, to doubt of your feelings; but, my friend, I long to know what has engaged you so deeply of late.’

‘Dunallan, I am not surprised ——.’

Catharine left the room before he proceeded farther, and joined Mrs Clanmar, whose countenance still glowed with the happiness she had felt on again seeing her amiable, though careless husband.

‘He is so kind to me when he does come,’ said she, ‘and so delighted to have his little William again in his arms, that I am sure he would be happier at home than anywhere, if he had a wife worthy of him.’

‘I think the wife has not a husband worthy of her,’ said Catharine, affectionately kissing her cheek; ‘at least he does



not take time to study the truly amiable, and sensible, and indeed, as far as I see, perfect character of that wife.'

'Ah, Lady Dunallan, your pity for me leads you to say all this: but no more on such a poor subject. Clanmar says he has much to talk about with Lord Dunallan, on business which could have no interest for you, and has desired me to attempt to make your time pass agreeably, by undeceiving you respecting reports which he knows you must have heard regarding the cause of his marrying me—reports which are injurious to Lord Dunallan, but which he knows Lord Dunallan himself would never allude to or contradict. He is determined you shall know all, that his own mind may, in some degree, be at rest, after, as he says, having been the most ungrateful of human beings.'

'Oh,' replied Catharine, 'I do not now believe that Dunallan could ever have been any thing but the best of friends. I do not believe Mr Clanmar can be ungrateful. I will not hear this story, Mrs Clanmar; we shall talk of something else, my dear friend.'

'You may trust me, Lady Dunallan,' replied Mrs Clanmar; 'I shall not make you think very harshly of Clanmar. I wish you to listen to me, because you will then know better about myself. I have not been very justly treated by report; and I wish you to know also, that you may tell Lord Dunallan how very miserable Clanmar was without his friendship.'

Catharine saw that Mrs Clanmar wished to proceed, and consented, though rather unwillingly; yet she felt sweetly gratified in having this last stain cleared away from the character of Dunallan.

'You must hear something about my early youth, my dear Lady Dunallan,' began Mrs Clanmar, 'to lead you to excuse, in some degree, the rashness and guilt into which my ignorance and selfishness led me. I shall not tire you with myself.'

'It is because I wish to know more about you, my dear friend, my soul's sister, that I listen to this story,' replied Catharine. 'Tell me all about yourself, and be short on every other subject.'

'Since you desire it, and call me so sweet a name, I shall just speak what I feel,' replied Mrs Clanmar, 'and take you back with me to that happy time when I lived with my good and kind



grandfather in his romantic and beautiful retreat in Switzerland. You know that by birth I am a German. My mother was an only child. She made an unhappy marriage, and died soon after my birth. Her death almost broke my grandfather's heart, and he retired with me into Switzerland, where he lived in the greatest seclusion, and gave himself up to the study of philosophy, and to his fondness for me. I, on my part, cared for no one but him. As I advanced in age, he taught me whatever I learned without trouble, but he never for a moment contradicted or restrained me. He saw that I was naturally of a tender and romantic disposition. Ah! if he had taught me how unfit such a disposition is to struggle with temptation—if he had taught me how to regulate my feelings—but he loved me for them, and cultivated my romantic softness as the most amiable perfection of a woman. When I grew up, I read or thought of nothing but what increased the exalted state of my imagination. I spent my days in dreams of the future, or in reading such works as could interest me by being still more romantic than my own mind. I knew a few of the neighbours around us, but they inspired no regard. They seemed common beings, satisfied with the dull life they led, and destitute of those feelings in which I placed all my ideas of happiness. I was in this state of mind when the report that two young English travellers had come to reside in our neighbourhood reached my ears, with many interesting particulars respecting them:—that they were extremely handsome—noble in their appearance and manners to a degree seldom seen in that sequestered spot—and many other circumstances respecting their affluence and generosity, to which I did not attend; but what interested me most, was the description of one of the travellers, who always wore the deepest mourning—spent whole days in wandering about alone, or in viewing with apparent enthusiasm the glories of nature. They said he was very handsome, but looked pale, and extremely melancholy; that it was the loss of a beloved friend which thus deeply affected his health and spirits; and that the other gentleman was so devotedly attached to him, that he had left his friends and country to follow him. I felt, before I saw them, the deepest interest in



these strangers, and had formed a thousand visions respecting them. A week passed, and though I had not yet seen either, I had figured in my imagination their personal appearance, and many other particulars respecting both. I hoped I should see them on Sunday at our little village church, and dared scarcely raise my eyes to the place where strangers usually sat ; at last I ventured, but they were not there. " Ah ! " thought I, " they will not offer their devotions to the great Author of nature in this contemptible little resort for the low and narrow-minded. They will worship Him under the glorious canopy of Heaven, while nature, in all its magnificence around them, will fill their exalted minds with suitable ideas of that Being whose noble creatures they are ; " and then I despised the church, and all the lowly beings it contained, and wearied of the service. Ah ! I have learned since, that though " the heavens is His throne, and the earth His footstool, " " God dwells only with the lowly and contrite soul. " When the service was over, I asked my grandfather to walk with me on the banks of the lake, that there we might raise our thoughts to subjects worthy of the day. Many of the peasants, surrounded by their children, were enjoying the coolness of the breeze from the water. On one piece of land which jutted into the lake, many of the children were at play, while their mothers, engaged in chatting with each other, seemed to forget a danger to which they were constantly exposed ; for it was well known, that at the point of this neck of land, which was rocky and precipitous, the water was so deep, and the current so strong, that it was next to impossible to save any one who fell into it. When we had passed this point, and had entered the wood close by it, we were met by two gentlemen, whose appearance immediately convinced me they must be the two strangers, the idea of whom had indeed never been absent from my thoughts. My heart beat quick, and I scarcely dared to raise my eyes. One, I saw, was in deep mourning. I looked at him for a moment ; his eyes were fixed on me, but he turned them with indifference away. His countenance I thought the finest I had ever seen. My grandfather turned round to look at the strangers. I did the same. The one in mourning walked slowly on—the other turned to look back, and I met his eyes,



and turned away; but scarcely had I done so, when screams from the women we had just passed startled us. On looking round, we saw one of them running with an appearance of frenzy to the neck of land,—we hurried to the spot. The stranger in mourning inquired into the cause, for we saw nothing. “My child! my child!” exclaimed the woman, almost frantic with despair, and held back by the others, while they, at the same time, grasped their own children. The stranger in mourning rushed forward, asking at what part the child had fallen in. My grandfather seized his arm to detain him. He shook him off, and turned with a look of anger and contempt to see who stopped him; but when he saw my poor old grandfather, who gently said to him, “It is impossible—you will only lose your own life,” he smiled with the most melancholy expression, saying, “I care not;” and then pushing away some other men who had now come forward, and wished to stop him, he plunged into the lake. For an instant he did not appear, and all waited in silent terror, dreading that he might have got under the rock which projected close over the water. His friend was with difficulty held back by the men, who increased in numbers. At last the stranger appeared, holding the child in one arm, while with the other he stemmed the current with astonishing ease; and after some prodigious efforts of strength reached the shore. A general shout of admiration welcomed him. The poor mother received her child on her knees—The other women clung around him. His friend seemed unable to express his joy, while the stranger alone appeared little moved, but by the gratitude of the mothers, who would not let him go, but kissed his hands, and clung about his knees. He at last gently disengaged himself from them, saying, with an expression of such sadness, I shall never forget it, “Oh! if you knew how little I have risked!”

‘You will have guessed, my dear Lady Dunallan,’ said Mrs Clanmar, seeing Catharine’s eyes filled with tears, ‘that this humane stranger was Lord Dunallan; his friend my Clanmar. My grandfather was so delighted by the humanity, and so interested by the melancholy, and indifference about life, in the stranger, that though he in general avoided forming new acquaintances, he went the day after the event I have just related,



to inquire for him, and to offer him all the hospitality in his power. He came back to me delighted with both him and his friend; and his account of their conversation, added to the enthusiasm with which I already admired the humanity, courage, and deeply interesting appearance of the one, and the devoted attachment of the other. They soon returned my grandfather's visit, and I was at last introduced to their acquaintance. I dared scarcely venture to speak. I listened to Lord Dunallan as to a being of a superior order. He seemed to feel pity for my timidity, and with that gentleness which you know, Lady Dunallan, he possesses so much more than other men, encouraged me to enter into conversation. I did not, during their first visit, almost see Clanmar; but afterwards, when I had gained courage, and could at my ease fulfil my part in attempting to entertain our new guests, Lord Dunallan began to take less notice of me. I thought I had in some way offended him, and tried all the means I could to induce him again to converse in his gentle and winning way with me: but he only became more cold, and addressed all his conversation to my grandfather. Mr Clanmar, on the contrary, seemed only to study my wishes. He was so kind to me, I could not long forget his presence, as I had done at first. He had read just such books as I had read; and understood all my feelings. I had never before met with any one who did, and his conversation became every day more delightful to me. He came far oftener to visit us than Lord Dunallan did. He discovered my hours of walking, and always accompanied me; and when Lord Dunallan did come to us, and talked with my grandfather, Clanmar and I conversed aside, or I sung and played to him. Sometimes when so engaged, I observed Lord Dunallan regard us with an expression of inquietude which I could not understand. I asked Clanmar why his friend seemed disturbed at seeing us so happy in each other's society. At first he evaded my question, then told me that Dunallan was sorry to see him love me, because his father wished him to love a rich countrywoman of his own. "But," said Clanmar to me, "could you, Annette, love whomever your grandfather commanded you?" I felt that I could not, but asked if Dunallan himself could obey such an order. Clanmar told me that Lord Dun-



allan had been engaged, since a boy, to marry a young heiress, to whom he was to be united on his return home. From that day I viewed Lord Dunallan differently. I became afraid of him; and Clanmar and I were happier when we met without his being present. Ah! Lady Dunallan, had I known this young heiress then! I should only have thought the more highly of him for his choice, but I thought ——.

‘Had you known, my dear Mrs Clanmar,’ interrupted Catharine, ‘that this promise had been extorted from him when a thoughtless boy, and that part of his inducement for travelling was to avoid fulfilling it, you would have pitied him still more than you did.’

‘And was that really the case?’

‘Yes, my dear friend; and the same promise had also been won from me. When we met to fulfil it, we both regarded each other with prejudice and dislike.’

‘Ah, I thought you did not feel for Mr Dunallan as he deserved, when I saw you then,’ replied Mrs Clanmar. ‘I thought it might be the way of your country, to assume cold reserved manners before marriage, but now you feel ——’

‘Now,’ interrupted Catharine, ‘I feel how unjust I was—how perfectly amiable he is—but go on, my dear friend.’

‘Well, Clanmar and I, without avowing it to each other, avoided Lord Dunallan. Clanmar devoted himself to me, and I soon thought of no one but him. I need not tell you, Lady Dunallan, how captivating Clanmar’s affection was to me. I then thought love was the business of life. Ah! how soon the dream was over; and while it lasted, it was mixed with a thousand pains. My grandfather loved Clanmar, and was pleased to see his affection for me. He said he would die in peace, if he saw his child the wife of so excellent and amiable a young man. He loved him the better for being English. He loved his country, and was sure his romantic and feeling child would be happy amongst that refined and generous people. This he often declared to Clanmar, who made no secret of his love for me. At last my grandfather spoke on the same subject to Lord Dunallan. He made no reply, but on the same day Clanmar came to accompany me in my walk, looking so very wretched,



that I feared some misfortune had happened to him. I importuned him to tell me the cause of his melancholy, and at last he told me what had just passed between him and his friend. Lord Dunallan had declared, that unless he instantly either quitted me, or openly asked me in marriage, he would inform my grandfather that Clanmar's father never would consent to our union, and guard him against suffering me to indulge affections which could only lead to misery. Clanmar did not then tell me all the conversation which had passed between his friend and him. If he had, I never again would have listened to him. He has since told me that Lord Dunallan tried first to convince him of his ingratitude and cruelty in attempting the ruin and misery of an innocent girl, whose ignorance and childishness made her an easy prey; and who had so anxiously seconded her aged parent in his kindness and hospitality; and many other things he said which my Clanmar ought not to have disregarded. He promised to intercede with Clanmar's father for his forgiveness if he married me—but Clanmar told me none of this. I shall pass over what followed. Nothing can excuse my consenting to leave my kind and gentle parent when so old and dependent on me. I deserved all I have since suffered for that cruel and selfish step. Clanmar persuaded me to leave my peaceful home with him, and I have known little peace since. He persuaded me, that a vow he made to me, and gave me in writing, was all that was necessary to constitute marriage in his country. I had been happy while Clanmar spent his days with me at my grandfather's. I then thought, that to be always with him would be happiness enough to compensate for every other thing, but I could not still the voice of conscience. Clanmar's love could not make me forget my aged parent, whose happiness had depended on me. We talked of sentiment and feeling, but I could not help regarding myself as the most unfeeling and selfish of human beings. Clanmar devoted himself to me. For a month we continued travelling from place to place, partly for concealment, and partly to view that beautiful country. At the end of this month, while we were one evening seated together at an open window of a beautiful residence, which Clanmar had hired in a charming valley many miles distant from my home, and en-



deavouring to persuade ourselves that we were happy, while each anxiously regarded the melancholy expressed in the countenance of the other, Clanmar became suddenly as pale as death.

“It is he himself! it is Dunallan!” exclaimed he, starting up. I instantly fainted, and fell lifeless in his arms. When I recovered, Clanmar was supporting me, while Lord Dunallan stood in silence near us, his eyes fixed on me, and expressive only of the deepest pity. I started from Clanmar, and involuntarily knelt before Lord Dunallan, and pronounced the name of my grandfather.

“I left him well in health, Annette, but you know he must be miserable.”

His voice was so gentle, I burst into tears, and sunk still lower on the ground.—He turned to Clanmar.

“What a change is here, Clanmar!—But I do not mean to reproach—I have no title to reproach any one. I will tell you the promise I have made. I must fulfil it, or your grandfather, Annette, will sink into the grave.”

I shuddered. “Only tell me what I must do,” exclaimed I.

Clanmar would have raised me from the ground. “No,” said I, “Clanmar, I am unworthy to stand in Mr Dunallan’s presence.”

Lord Dunallan looked at me for a moment, then said, “Annette, I would willingly take your load of guilt instead of my own. Rise, unfortunate girl. Why should one guilty being be thus humble before another?”—He raised me with an air of authority which I could not resist.

“Annette,” he continued, “I have promised either to bring you back to your grandfather, or a written positive proof that you are Clanmar’s wife. Your grandfather will be satisfied with the last, and the hope of seeing you before you leave Switzerland.”

“I shall give him that,” exclaimed I; “and does he forgive me?”

Mr Dunallan’s countenance brightened; he turned to Clanmar—

“Am I not deceived, Clanmar? Can I have those proofs?”



‘Clanmar hesitated—. “Oh yes,” exclaimed I, “you shall have those proofs, and Clanmar will again take me home.”

‘Mr Dunallan did not regard me, but looked at Clanmar for an answer.

‘“Mr Dunallan,” said Clanmar at last, “I know not what entitles you thus to interfere in my concerns. I really must request that I may no farther be dictated to. I know not how to brook such officious interference.”

‘Dunallan’s countenance changed; he turned to me—“I see, Annette, you are deceived—there is no marriage. Do you consent to return with me, if it is so?”

‘“O, it is not so!” exclaimed I, producing Clanmar’s written vow.

‘Clanmar snatched it from me. “Do you allow of his insolent interference, Annette?”

‘“Clanmar,” said Mr Dunallan firmly, “I see you have deceived this innocent girl. Annette, what has led you to suppose a marriage has taken place?”

‘“Annette, I command you not to reply,” exclaimed Clanmar, his eyes flashing fire.

‘“I ask you, Annette, in the name of your only surviving parent,” said Mr Dunallan, calmly; “the name of husband only is more sacred.”

‘I threw myself on my knees. “I believe before Heaven, that I am Clanmar’s wife; he has given me a written vow. Ah! Mr Dunallan, can you believe it otherwise? Can you think your friend so wicked?”

‘“A written vow!” repeated Mr Dunallan, looking at Clanmar. He was silent—indeed he had assumed an appearance of anger to conceal his real feelings, as he confessed to me afterwards.

‘“Annette,” said Mr Dunallan solemnly to me, “this is no marriage—you see Clanmar does not say it is. It would be a marriage in no country. You have supposed it so, and therefore you are still guiltless. Return to your parent. He still loves you, and will do whatever you wish to conceal your innocent misfortunes from the world. If you remain longer here you must be guilty.”



‘I looked at Clanmar.

‘“Will you leave me, Annette?”

‘“Never, Clanmar; but have you deceived me?”

‘“I love you more, Annette, than all else that the world contains ——.”

‘“And yet deceives you,” interrupted Dunallan. “O! Annette, how can you believe him? It is self he loves. Clanmar, how can you deceive a being so devoted to you?”

‘“Mr Dunallan, I beg you will no longer interfere. You see it is Annette’s choice to remain with me.”

‘“Is it, Annette?”

‘“No. Oh, Clanmar! I must leave you—you allow you have deceived me—am I not your wife? Speak! you will not be questioned by a proud friend, but answer me. You know I will believe you. Am I really not your wife, Clanmar?”

‘He turned away—I followed him. “Whisper it to me, Clanmar. I will believe a word from you.” I clasped my hands in agony, and knelt before him. Clanmar is of a gentle nature. He was overcome.

‘“What proof do you wish for, Mr Dunallan?” said he, haughtily.

‘“To see the ceremony performed myself, before proper witnesses, that I may bear their testimony to Mr Weitzmar.”

‘Clanmar hesitated for a moment, then said, “You shall have your wish, Dunallan; and afterwards I hope we never more shall meet.”

‘“Annette is perhaps not aware of the reception she may meet with from your friends, Clanmar. She possibly might choose rather to return to the peaceful, and still really innocent state from which you took her, than subject herself to their contempt.—I speak plainly, Annette,” said he, gently to me, “because you ought to know the truth.”

‘“My wife shall never meet with contempt!” exclaimed Clanmar, haughtily. Ah! how little truly! Mr Dunallan staid till he saw the marriage ceremony performed in the presence of the mayor of the neighbouring town, whom he induced to attend, and several other witnesses. He then returned to my grandfather; and kindly remained in his neighbourhood until he saw



that he had, in some degree, recovered the shock he had received from my ingratitude. In some weeks I returned to my home. My grandfather was again happy; we remained with him until I had my first little boy. I soon lost him. I never really knew grief till then. Clanmar too grieved deeply. My grandfather soon followed my baby to the grave; but I had the consolation to think I had made his last days happy.

‘ We then came to England, where I was indeed received with contempt. I have succeeded in doing this contempt in part away; but Clanmar feels that I deserve it. O! how often have I wished myself laid in the grave beside my indulgent parent and my sweet baby. But now I have learned not to repine. I can now say, “It has been good for me to be afflicted.” I have been taught to place my hopes of happiness where alone they can be realized. But I will return to speak of Lord Dunallan. When we came to England, we found the most unjust reports were believed respecting him, which he had never contradicted. Clanmar was received more kindly than he expected by his friends, because they believed the marriage had been made by the “crafty Dunallan,” as they called him. I attempted to defend his character, but only made matters worse. Clanmar still retained his angry feelings till about a year ago, when Lord Dunallan came to him, and I know not what passed; but Clanmar was convinced of his injustice. He has been far kinder to me ever since—he has told the exact truth to his own family, and now loves Lord Dunallan more than ever. But I am forgetting to tell you, my dear Lady Dunallan, how unhappy Clanmar was, while without Lord Dunallan’s friendship. Lord Dunallan wrote many letters to Clanmar, which he never answered. He wished to believe his friend had injured him. “What title had he to interfere in my concerns?” he would often say; but then he would become thoughtful, and recal all Dunallan’s kindness to him, and his noble and amiable qualities. One day on my remarking, that nothing but friendship for him, and pity for me, had given him any title to interfere. “Ah, Annette,” replied he, “you would not say so if you knew all. Dunallan, the very first day I saw you, warned me against the danger of indulging the admiration with which you had inspired



me. I laughed at his fears, and he then declared that, as he had introduced me into your family (for your grandfather was so occupied with Dunallan, he quite overlooked me), he considered himself the protector of your innocence. I only laughed at his knight errantry; but he again and again repeated this." Clanmar told me also, that Mr Dunallan had not ceased to follow us from place to place, declaring he would never give up his search until he found me, and at least attempted to rescue me from a state of guilt and misery, to which he considered himself in some degree accessory. Ah, Lady Dunallan, what cause of gratitude I have to him! Will you express, for me, what I feel to him, for I have not courage?"

Catharine tenderly embraced her humble and amiable young friend.

'My dear Mrs Clanmar, you require no courage to say all you wish to Dunallan; he feels for you the kindness of a brother, and the greatest esteem.'

'Esteem! Ah, who can feel esteem for me, a poor uneducated foreigner, ignorant of all your customs, and of the information and accomplishments suited to my station? If you knew the pains I have taken to acquire your language and your manners, that I might not disgrace my husband; but I have not succeeded. Clanmar is kind to me, but I see it is from pity; few of his friends visit me. Oh! how often I pray to be removed to a happier state, and make room for one who would be worthy to fill my place, and would make Clanmar's home what it should be—only I would take my little William with me.'

Catharine wept with her friend. 'My dear sister,' said she, affectionately, 'I shall never regard you as a more distant relation. You are younger than I ——?'

'I am nineteen.'

'Well, you are younger—my younger sister, my dear Annette, regard me as such. I think you may look for happier days. It is not your fault that you are not regarded with the esteem you deserve. It is the fault of your husband's friends. I will not say your husband; but they are ill judged, as well as cruel, in this. Let us convince them they are so, my dear Annette. You are far too humble. I do not mean in the sight of Heaven. Hu-



mility there is the road to perfection ; but you set too high a value on the opinions and attainments of others. Trust your own judgment, dear Annette ; guided by such piety as yours, it will lead you far more right than those to whom you bend. But we shall assist each other, my dear friend. I shall ask Dunallan to attempt to persuade Mr Clanmar to come this summer to his estate near Arnmore. We shall always be together. You shall teach me to be humble and lowly like you ; and I shall attempt to assist you in supporting your own opinions and place in society. Dunallan will second me.'

Mrs Clanmar threw herself on Catharine's bosom. 'Dear, kind Lady Dunallan !'

Catharine pressed her warmly to her heart. 'Sweet, amiable creature ! I shall love you too much.'

Clanmar entered just as Catharine said this. He looked surprised, but greatly pleased.

'Mr Clanmar,' said Catharine, 'If any thing could reconcile me to Dunallan's illness, it would be the acquisition of this dear friend and sister. We have adopted each other for such without your leave. Will you confirm the relation by your consent ?'

'Ah ! you are too condescending, too good,' began Mrs Clanmar. Catharine put her hand upon her lips.

'Annette is highly honoured,' said Clanmar, looking affectionately at his wife.

'Then I look upon it you allow of our being sisters, Mr Clanmar ; so good-bye, my beloved sister,' said she, kissing Mrs Clanmar's hand, and then hastening away to her still dearer relation.

Dunallan received her with even more than his usual delight. He soon observed that she had been in tears, and anxiously inquired the cause.

'They were tears of pleasure, Dunallan. I have been listening to an account of the humanity, and courage, and goodness of a very dear friend.'

'What happy friend was this, my Catharine ?'

'The best, and kindest, and dearest I have on earth,' replied she, tears again starting into her eyes. 'Dunallan, why did you not at least tell me of your having risked your life to save that child ?'



You, too, can deceive, I see. You wished me to believe I knew all your history, and here is a part of it, which, if you had really wished me to love you, surely should not have been concealed.'

Dunallan smiled. 'Your sex, my Catharine, set an undue value on such exertions. A man would be a monster who could see a woman almost distracted from the loss of her child, and make no effort to save it.'

'But when the other men made no effort—and when you were told you would only lose your own life, Dunallan!'

'Had I been married then, Catharine,' replied Dunallan, smiling, 'I might have hesitated perhaps.'

Catharine went over part of Mrs Clanmar's story, and described her piety, and humble opinion of herself.

Dunallan was affected, and entered warmly into her wishes respecting her young friend. He thought Clanmar would willingly consent to reside near Arnmore, provided he could free himself from his political engagements. 'For I find,' said Dunallan, 'that he has involved himself with some political demagogues, who will only make a tool of him.'

'What is it you see to love in Clanmar, my dear Dunallan?' asked Catharine. 'But forgive me—what a question respecting a friend! Do not answer me.' She blushed at her own thoughtlessness.

'Ask what you will, my own Catharine,' replied Dunallan, smiling. 'I am not surprised at this question. I can scarcely tell why I love Clanmar. He is one of those people every body loves, without knowing why, unless it is perhaps because he is always keeping one uneasy about him. Nothing but religion will ever preserve him from the endless errors to which a character like his is exposed. A steady ever-present powerful principle is absolutely necessary for him, but he is yet almost a stranger to this.'

'And what is any one without it?' said Catharine.

'True, my Catharine, but I mean even for respectability in the eyes of the world. Clanmar requires this internal guide to prevent his having twenty different opinions on the same subject in as many hours. Your amiable and humble friend, will, I hope, become more known and respected, and then she may per-



haps have influence with Clanmar, who at present regards her as an ignorant child, though he does love her. Indeed, he is most affectionate in his dispositions. But, my Catharine, it is late ——.’

‘And you wish us to read together. Does nothing ever make you forget your first duties, Dunallan?’

He smiled. ‘Do you wish to become my confessor, Catharine?’

‘For once I do wish it.’

‘Well then, I do not often forget such a duty as this, because the hour returns and reminds me of it; but I have sometimes passed it over, and would probably, when engaged as I now am, do so still, if I had not learned that remorse, and the consciousness of ingratitude, are such very painful feelings, and so much more painful on every new offence, that I dread them more than I can confess to you, unless I should lay open the long series of struggles between conscience and temptation, and hopes and fears, and happy hours, and dark and painful ones, which have brought me the little way I am on my pilgrimage,—and now my sweet partner on this journey shall I confess you?’

‘Oh no, Dunallan.’

‘And when are we to become so completely one, my Catharine, as to be perfectly frank on every subject—on this particularly?’

‘We have not time to-night, and my heart is in a sad confused state,’ replied Catharine.

‘You must not delay then, my love, to examine and bring it back to its lawful owner. All our blessings will only end in miseries if they come between us and Him.’

He found a passage for her to read so suited to recal her wandering thoughts, that Catharine was soon in tears; and a conversation followed, in which Dunallan drew from her, without her perceiving his intention, the exact state of her mind and feelings on the subject on which they talked; and while they conversed, mingled those advices which his superior knowledge and experience enabled him to give, so kindly, so tenderly, that Catharine felt this deep interest in her best concerns bound her affections more closely than ever to Dunallan, while his feelings



for her during this conversation, seemed even painfully anxious and tender.

---

### CHAPTER XXIII.

DUNALLAN now recovered rapidly. Dr Vernon allowed him to leave his apartment, but though it was now the second week of May, the weather was still too cold to admit of his going out.

Catharine's heart was full of gratitude to Heaven—and of happiness, when, in his usual dress, he again with her joined their friends the first evening in the drawing-room. He looked thin, but well and animated; and Catharine's countenance expressed the delight she felt, when she named him to Miss Morven, and saw in her looks the impression his appearance and manners made on her. Mrs Clanmar was also present, and expressed her pleasure on again seeing him, only by her looks and gentle attentions. Clanmar was not present. Walderford, however, soon joined the party, who were all too happy to talk very rationally. Walderford only had it not in his nature to be playful; but he smiled when others were so: and particularly enjoyed Mrs Clanmar's simplicity, her timid playfulness, and broken language.

'Who do you think have arrived in London, Lady Dunallan?' said Miss Morven.

'Who?' asked Catharine.

'Mrs Lennox and her daughter.'

'Rose! I rejoice to hear it. You remember her, Dunallan?'

'Perfectly. Walderford, you must guard your heart. Miss Lennox is exactly what you have told me you admire in women. Walderford, that blush is ominous.'

'If I do lose my heart,' said Walderford, 'is there no hope? Is Miss Lennox already engaged? or do you mean to infer the little chance I should have of making myself agreeable?'

'Oh! certainly not; but I expect when you do give up your heart, that it will be with a reluctant and desperate struggle. I hope I shall witness your efforts to withhold it.'



Walderford shook his head, 'You are mistaken, Dunallan, I on the contrary long to dispose of it.'

'Well,' said Catharine, 'do not form your opinion of Rose too hastily. She requires only to be known to win any heart, I think; but she is too modest, like my sister Annette. But, my dear Miss Morven, what has induced Mrs Lennox to come to London?'

'A strange story is told. I cannot vouch for the truth of it. Mrs Lennox, you know, has become a very fashionable lady. One requisite, in her opinion, to that character is, to make a great marriage for her daughter.'

'Alas!' said Walderford.

'Well,' continued Miss Morven, smiling, 'You do not know, perhaps, Mr Walderford, that at Edinburgh the beaux consist chiefly either of grave gentlemen of the law, who can never afford to marry younger than fifty, and who are not held in high estimation by the young ladies on first coming out; or of young professional men, too poor to marry; or of young men perhaps of good fortune, who are sent there to attend the university. So, in fact, the only gentlemen who can marry, are either above fifty, or under twenty, unless, perhaps, a stray nabob may appear for a wonder, and they too are generally a little old. Amongst the young gentlemen last winter, the most captivating, or, in other words, the one who possessed the largest fortune, was a young Englishman, a Mr Dudley, who was reported to be immensely rich.'

'From what part of England was he?' asked Walderford.

'From Hampshire, I believe.'

'My own cousin,' said Walderford, laughing; 'I do not believe there is a sillier fellow in England.'

'That was Rose's opinion, I imagine,' said Miss Morven, 'but Mrs Lennox's was different; and, indeed, all the mammas agreed in courting young Mr Dudley by the most flattering attentions; and Mrs Lennox had the happiness and triumph to see that Rose had very soon attracted the attentions of this charming youth. Rose, however, seemed to find those envied attentions very irksome, and avoided them with a degree of care which only excited Mr Dudley's desire to be more assiduous. Mrs



Lennox and Rose were continually differing about him, and George Lennox joined his sister in thinking him singularly deficient in every engaging quality. Rose, thus supported by her brother, gently expostulated with Mrs Lennox, on the impropriety of encouraging his attentions; but her mother would not listen to her, and continued her flattering kindness to the gentleman, but played her cards so ill, that a summons arrived for the young lover to return home immediately, his friends having other views for him. He in vain attempted, before his departure, to make his sentiments known to Rose. She knew she would displease her mother beyond forgiveness by rejecting his addresses, and never therefore gave him an opportunity to say a word on the subject.

‘It is said, however, that Mrs Lennox and the young man came to an explanation, and that Mrs Lennox has brought Rose to London, where he now is, in the hope, that when absent from her brother, she may be induced to consent to her wishes.’ Just as Miss Morven finished her story, the door of the apartment was thrown open, and Miss Lennox was announced.

‘Ah! I thought so,’ said Miss Morven.

Rose was soon in Catharine’s arms. ‘My dearest Lady Dunallan, I could not be near you a whole day without seeing you. Do I intrude?’ added she, blushing on perceiving Dunallan.

‘No, my dear Rose, you cannot intrude.’

Mrs Clanmar and Rose met like sisters.

‘You must regard Dunallan as an old friend also, Rose,’ said Catharine.

Rose smiled, and held out her hand to him. ‘I believe, my Lord, you will value my friendship less now.’

‘No, indeed, my dear Miss Lennox,’ replied Dunallan, kissing her hand, ‘you must not think me so ungrateful, nor find any excuse for withdrawing your friendship from me in my prosperity.’

‘What does all this mean?’ asked Catharine, smiling.

‘It means, my dear Catharine, that at one time, when I was very sadly treated by you and every one else, and in very melancholy circumstances indeed, Miss Lennox had the generosity always to treat me so humanely, that I could not resist express-



ing my admiration and gratitude to her on that morning, which, I believe, you then regarded as the most miserable of your life.'

'*Then!*' repeated Catharine, smiling.

'Allow me, Miss Lennox,' said Dunallan, 'to introduce my friend Mr Walderford to you.'

Rose turned to Walderford. There was an expression of archness and meaning in Dunallan's look at his friend, when he introduced him to Rose, which she did not see, but which called a blush into Walderford's countenance, and an air of embarrassment, very unlike his usual self-possessed and composed manner. Rose also blushed, and Dunallan turned to Catharine to conceal a smile he could not suppress. Walderford for some time could not overcome his confusion sufficiently to join in the conversation.

Catharine inquired particularly about Elizabeth. 'I hope I shall soon see her now,' said she.

'Do you mean to leave London immediately?' asked Rose, anxiously.

'Dr Vernon says we may perhaps venture to travel in a week.'

Rose sighed deeply.

'Doctors,' said Walderford, 'always mention a much earlier time than they mean, to please their patients.'

'I cannot wish that to be the case now,' said Rose, 'though I shall feel in a strange land indeed, when all my friends go away.'

Rose seemed in very low spirits, and soon took leave, saying she *must* go,—though she seemed really reluctant to leave a party so unlike that to which she must return at home. When she was gone, Dunallan, smiling, asked Walderford his opinion of her.

'I shall certainly not tell you,' replied Walderford, laughing, 'and I shall not long remain unrevenged.'

'It will not be easy, Walderford, to take revenge on me now. I care not how much you suppose I am in love.'

Catharine, when Walderford was gone, after expressing the pleasure it would give her to see Rose removed from her



mother's persecution, into the care of such a man as Walderford, — 'But why, Dunallan,' said she, 'did you embarrass your friend by your looks?'

'I cannot tell why, my Catharine; I was amused by his solemn air. Walderford's happiness would be more increased by having some one to love and to love him, than any one's I know, except myself. I only wish him to be as happy as I am.'

For several succeeding evenings, Dunallan joined his friends in the drawing-room. He had been allowed to go out also; and nothing seemed now likely to detain him in London above a few days longer. Catharine looked forward to their return to Arnmore with delight; but with Dunallan she was happy anywhere. His usual vivacity and powers of conversation returned with his returning strength. He was the life of all around him, while at the same time he always contrived to lead the conversation to subjects which are generally thought little suited to increase the cheerfulness of society.

'Why should we ever do, or think, or say, what is improper to be done, or thought, or said, in the presence of Heaven?' said he, one evening when the usual little party were assembled. 'There is nothing in religion which forbids innocent gaiety of heart. Indeed, I now wonder how any heart can be gay without it; and I really never feel at ease in conversation, until something has been said to remind us all in whose presence we are. Oh! how those people mistake who think religion gloomy. What ignorance of its nature ——!'

Clanmar entered while he spoke.

'Ah, Dunallan,' said he, 'I wish I knew that secret of happiness which you seem to possess.'

'Every one may know it, my friend, but you do not give yourself time to become acquainted with it. Have you now disengaged yourself completely from your political friends, or does something still remain to be done?'

'Oh, I cannot disengage myself; I wish I could from my soul; but it is impossible. My honour is pledged, I find. I cannot go to Scotland.'

'Your honour pledged! my friend, what do you mean?'

'I promised to support them during an election which is



coming on. I must support them through every stage of its progress, and I do not care one straw who gains it.'

'My friend, how can you be so weak? Tell the truth. Plainly tell your friends that you have undertaken what you feel you cannot perform; and that you think it your duty to your country, first to learn its constitution, before you attempt to interfere in electing its governors. Tell them with equal plainness, that until you are conscious of being competent in some measure to the task, you will not again appear to take any part, and that you do not then pledge yourself to any set of opinions. You need not conceal, my friend, that you are aware you have been deceived.'

'I cannot, Dunallan—I may perhaps write.'

'No, that will not do. My dear Clanmar, what do you shrink from? Is the displeasure of these designing men as much to be feared as the contempt of your country, and the disapprobation of your own conscience? Which of your party do you dread most to offend?'

'Mr F——.'

'Well, my friend, and why so? just because in some points he is really respectable. Go to him, Clanmar, and let him convey your sentiments to the others.'

Clanmar laid his head in deep and painful thought, on his crossed arms on the table. Dunallan stooped down, and earnestly addressed him for some moments, in a voice too low to be heard by the others.

'I will, my friend!' exclaimed Clanmar at last, hastily starting up, and instantly quitting the room.

Dunallan attempted to converse, but was absent, and anxiously thoughtful till Clanmar's return. At last he entered.

'It is done, my friend! Mr F. did not blame me. He is to make my sentiments known. He confessed he disapproved of my having been left ignorant of many things. I am free! My dear Annette, we shall go to Scotland.' He seemed in complete joy.

Mrs Clanmar wept with pleasure. Walderford and Rose had been conversing apart, but now all joined in Clanmar's happiness, it seemed so heartfelt; and it was soon agreed that all the party should in a few weeks join Dunallan and Catharine at Arnmore.



Several days passed away after this, yet Dunallan fixed no day for setting out. His physician had pronounced his recovery complete, and Catharine began to dread that something unpleasant detained him in London. He frequently appeared extremely thoughtful and uneasy.

‘My dear Dunallan,’ said Catharine to him at last, ‘may I ask what now detains us in London? I am anxious that you should again breathe the pure invigorating air of Arnmore.’

Dunallan hesitated.

‘I shall not ask, if you do not wish to tell me, Dunallan. I do not even wish to know, believe me; while I am with you I shall be happy any where.’

‘My love, it is for your sake I do not wish to call your attention to the cause of our delay; now I believe you must know—it cannot be much longer concealed. It is possible my Catharine, that I may be called to attend the trial of St Clair. I must remain, because it comes on immediately, and I cannot remain without you—at least, I cannot be so little selfish.’

‘Oh no, I only wish to go on your account, Dunallan.’

‘And for me, my Catharine, where you are, is my earthly happiness.’

Next day, Dunallan told Catharine that St Clair’s trial would come on the day after, and that he was called to attend as a witness. He seemed extremely uneasy.

‘What do you fear, Dunallan?’ asked Catharine. ‘Did you not assure me that nothing serious was likely to be proved against St Clair?’

‘Yes, my love, and so I then thought; but I find that during my illness all the truth was not imparted to me. I still hope, however, that my recovery may prevent any bad consequences to him, as to the charge respecting the duel; but his bribing my servant, and so many of the people at the post-office on the coast, to detain my letters, will, if proved, be considered, I fear, as a very serious affair,—and, indeed, might have done very great injury to the business that took me abroad, by delaying my instructions, some of which were in fact from government, and were not of a proper nature to be made public at the time.’



‘Will the cause of his doing this be brought forward on his trial, Dunallan?’ asked Catharine, anxiously.

‘Probably, my love, the cause will be urged in palliation of his guilt. You shrink from this, Catharine; you need not; my presence in the court will prevent any thing being said which ought to alarm your delicacy—that, my Catharine, is now the peculiar charge of your husband; and the feelings of this relation are so well understood, and so perfectly respected, that you have not the slightest cause for uneasiness.’

Catharine, however, could not overcome this, and other causes of still greater uneasiness. Dunallan’s health was not yet sufficiently re-established to make it safe for him, in her anxious opinion, to spend a whole day in a crowded and heated court. He only smiled at this fear; and still more when she expressed her apprehensions at the idea of his again seeing St Clair.

‘He has proved himself so revengeful, so desperate,’ said she. ‘You smile, Dunallan, but I do not think it so very foolish to have this dread of St Clair.’

‘Oh, my Catharine, how I love such foolishness! but this solicitude, so sweet to me, gives you pain; and believe me, there can be no cause for it. I wish that miserable St Clair were as safe. How mixed are the feelings of our happiest moments! Now, when I thought all promised so fair—so delightful—here is a cloud—a weight upon my breast, which even your presence cannot wholly remove.’

---

## CHAPTER XXIV.

DUNALLAN took an early leave of Catharine next morning. He wished to have some conversation with a lawyer, a friend of his, before he proceeded to the court. Catharine held his hand in hers, after he had repeatedly and tenderly taken leave. She still found something more to say. He saw her unwillingness to part from him, and assumed a gaiety of manner, she perceived he did not feel.



‘I shall leave the court, my love, the moment my presence is no longer required.’

‘Dear Dunallan, adieu. God be with you.’

He turned again to look at her as he left the room, and smiling, raised his hand to Heaven.—

‘The very hairs of our head are all numbered there, my Catharine.’

He then left her.

Catharine went to the window of her dressing-room, which looked to the street. She saw him get into his carriage, and received his smile and bow. He was then driven rapidly away, and she remembered her last separation from him, at the door of her friend Elizabeth’s house, and all that followed. She reproached herself for her ungrateful want of trust in Heaven, after having already experienced such mercy. ‘Oh that I had no will but that of God!’ exclaimed she, ‘I shall only know happiness then.’ She spent the hour that still remained, before she should be called to meet Mrs Clanmar, who had offered to be with her, in earnestly praying for Dunallan, for herself, and for the wretched St Clair. When she met her friend, she found that Clanmar had also gone to the court.

In a short time Mrs Clanmar and Catharine were joined by Rose, who astonished them by the information, that Mrs Lennox had just set out with Mrs St Clair, who had determined to be present at the trial of her son.

‘Impossible!’ exclaimed Catharine, ‘it surely will not be allowed. The charges against him are of a nature too serious.’

‘Every means,’ replied Rose, were attempted to prevent Mrs St Clair’s going, but in vain. She said, that whatever Arthur had to suffer in this world, she would share it with him if it was possible. She persists, in saying, at least, that she believes him completely innocent; and said she was going to witness his triumph over envy and calumny. She has laboured with the most unremitting ardour to interest in his behalf every person in power to whom she could gain admittance. She has even condescended to implore Lady Fitzhenry to exert her influence over Sir Henry Moncton in St Clair’s behalf, because Sir Henry is supposed to be a favourite in a very high quarter.’



Catharine rose and turned to the window at the last part of Rose's speech. She continued,

'Mrs St Clair came to Mamma last night, to ask if she would accompany her to-day to the court. Mamma hesitated, and Miss Morven, who was with us, attempted to dissuade Mrs St Clair from going, offering herself to be present, and to inform her faithfully of all that passed. But Mrs St Clair was not to be dissuaded; and there was something so touching in her affection for her unfortunate son, that, when no entreaties would prevail on her to give up her intention of being present, Miss Morven offered to accompany her, and then Mamma also consented. Lady Fitzhenry too had proposed accompanying Mrs St Clair, who, proud as she is, did not decline her offer, because she had exerted herself so much in St Clair's behalf. Miss Morven was greatly annoyed on hearing that Lady Fitzhenry was to be of the party, but whispered to me, that at such a time she could not attend either to appearances, or to her own feelings.'

'And is Lady Fitzhenry really gone to be present?' asked Catharine, with as much composure as she could assume.

'She is,' replied Rose. 'She called on her way, and Mamma went with her. Miss Morven had gone before with Mrs St Clair.'

Catharine's anxiety was greatly increased by this piece of information. She feared that Dunallan might see Lady Fitzhenry, and feel her presence excite emotions too powerful for a scene so public.

'My dear Lady Dunallan,' said Rose, after some time watching her friend's thoughtful and disturbed countenance, 'are you displeased at your friend, Miss Morven, having accompanied Mrs St Clair? She thought you would not, or she never would have offered.'

'Displeased! my dear Rose, certainly not. I wish from my heart I could in any way serve poor Mrs St Clair.'

'Mrs St Clair's brother, and another gentleman are to be with St Clair,' continued Rose, 'and several gentlemen offered to accompany Mrs St Clair, but, excepting a sister of her own, who is in bad health, she has no female friends in London.'



Catharine's uneasiness now increased every moment. She sent two of Dunallan's servants to attend in the court, as near as they could get to their master. She flew to the window whenever she heard a carriage approaching, in the hope that it might contain Dunallan himself. But the day passed on, and no one appeared from the court. Mrs Clanmar and Rose attempted to amuse Catharine's thoughts from the subject of her fears; but finding they did not succeed, they then tried to convince her of the justice of St Clair's sentence, should it even prove a severe one; and when Catharine at last betrayed the real cause of her anxiety, they attempted to prove that her fears were groundless, though Mrs Clanmar herself began, as the evening advanced, to betray some alarm.

At last a carriage drove rapidly to the door and stopped. It was Mrs St Clair's.

'Ah!' exclaimed Rose, 'It must be over, and St Clair acquitted, or Mrs St Clair would not come here.'

Miss Morven alighted from the carriage, and Catharine hurried down stairs to meet her.

'What has happened, Miss Morven? Is St Clair acquitted? Where is Dunallan?'

'I will tell you all I know, dear Lady Dunallan. The trial is not nearly over. Poor Mrs St Clair could remain no longer; but do not let us stand here.'

They entered the drawing-room, and Miss Morven, quite pale, and completely exhausted, threw herself on a sofa, and burst into tears.

Catharine stood by her as pale as death, dreading to hear what she should first say. Miss Morven struggled to recover herself, and soon succeeded so far as to be able to speak.

'Lord Dunallan is now apparently quite well, my dear Lady Dunallan ——.'

'Now! Miss Morven; was he unwell?'

'At first he seemed overcome, but now he appears quite recovered; but I shall tell you every thing. Poor Mrs St Clair! it is her distressed situation which has so overpowered me. Such a scene! Unfortunate woman!'



Miss Morven with difficulty regained sufficient composure to proceed.

‘ You know we went to the court very early. I wished to place Mrs St Clair in some unobserved situation, from whence we could easily retire, should the circumstances of the trial become too painful ; but, from some cause, which I cannot comprehend, Lady Fitzhenry chose the most conspicuous situation in the place, and from whence we were perfectly seen by poor St Clair, and those who were called as witnesses. Mrs St Clair also preferred this situation. Poor woman, she trusted too much to her affection and strength of mind. The court was soon excessively crowded ; and from the conversation which I imperfectly overheard around me, I perceived that the public opinion was very strongly against St Clair. I saw that his unfortunate mother heard some of the remarks which were made near us, and I longed for the arrival of the judges, and of the unfortunate St Clair, though I dreaded the effect his appearance might have on his mother.

‘ At last the judges and their attendants entered the court, and very soon after St Clair. His appearance seemed to make a very favourable impression. A murmur of admiration and pity followed his entrance. You know he is strikingly handsome. He walked with a firm composure of manner to his place, then turned his dark eyes on the crowds that surrounded him, with looks of haughty indifference. Poor Mrs St Clair perceived the impression her son’s appearance had made, and it produced a softness of feeling which, combined with his presence in such circumstances, had nearly overcome her. However, she struggled for composure, and, after some effort, succeeded. When the preliminary forms were over, Lord Dunallan was called as a witness respecting the letters which St Clair was accused of having intercepted. I perceived by the bustle and anxiety to see him, which prevailed in the court, that he was an object of great interest. When he approached there was instantly the most complete silence. St Clair regarded him with looks which are still before me. I never saw a countenance express so much malevolence. Lord Dunallan seemed to avoid looking at him. Mrs St Clair apparently participated in her son’s feel-



ing. She said, in a voice of suppressed indignation, "Specious hypocrite!" At that moment, for what cause I cannot conceive, Lady Fitzhenry chose to rise and stand forward in her already conspicuous situation. This movement attracted the attention, for a moment, of every one. Lord Dunallan also looked to the spot, and I suppose he perceived Mrs St Clair, for he instantly became deadly pale, and turned away his eyes with an expression almost of anguish, and seemed, for a moment, scarcely able to recover himself. "He is still unwell," was whispered by those around me. "He has not recovered from his wound. He is unable to bear the heat. What an interesting countenance!" He was requested to be seated, and windows were thrown open; but he declined sitting down, and declared himself perfectly able to proceed. While giving his evidence, you cannot conceive the deep melancholy which his countenance expressed. Even his voice was affected by it, and was low and sad. While he spoke, the court was so still, a whisper might have been distinctly heard; and all he said was so expressed as to give the most favourable construction possible to St Clair's intentions in stopping his letters. The audience seemed so much alive to this generosity, that each of his mild extenuating answers was followed by a murmur of applause; and he so far succeeded that, at the close of his evidence, I believe every person present felt more pity for, than inclination to condemn, St Clair. His mother's countenance brightened, and she looked around her, as if a weight had been removed from her spirits, but said nothing. The next witnesses were people from the Post-Office. They were very particularly examined, and their evidence was long and complicated. On the whole, however, it went very much to criminate St Clair. After this, his own servant was called. On being asked at what time he had entered St Clair's service, or some such question, he detailed very fully the means taken by St Clair to induce him to leave Lord Dunallan's and enter into his service. He also entered warmly into praise of his former master. During this part of his evidence St Clair's lawyers interfered, and desired the man to keep to the point, and answer only the questions which were put to him. These answers, however, became more and more disgraceful to St Clair,



and as they agreed completely with the evidence which had gone before, the impression against St Clair seemed every moment to increase, and very strong expressions were used by those around us. Mrs St Clair became very pale, but succeeded in suppressing every other appearance of emotion. I soon observed, however, that she trembled and breathed very quickly, though she attempted to overcome her agitation. I entreated her to leave the court, on account of the heat and pressure, but still she refused, though she could scarcely articulate. I expected she would faint, and even hoped she would, that she might have been conveyed from such a scene. Every new discovery implicated St Clair still more in meanness and guilt. Lord Dunallan will give you particulars. I was too much occupied in watching Mrs St Clair's looks to hear distinctly what passed. St Clair's own countenance now began to betray some emotion. At times he became pale. Lord Dunallan had retired. I had not seen him after he gave his evidence. At last the examination of St Clair's servant respecting the intercepted letters was closed; and after some business which I did not understand about the second charge, which, however, was connected with the first, he was called on to give his evidence regarding the meeting at —— Farm. Mrs St Clair, however, by that time looked so shockingly ill, that I could scarcely attend in the least to what passed. Lady Fitzhenry joined me in imploring her to leave the court. She scarcely seemed to hear us, but sat with her eyes fixed on her son. The expression of his countenance seemed to regulate her feelings, for I do not think she distinctly heard, or understood what passed. The people around us seemed to have at last discovered the deep interest she felt in the poor criminal, and no longer made any remarks, but very humanely attempted, by opening a window and other attentions, to assist our efforts to render her as easy as possible. At last I heard St Clair's servant desired to repeat the expressions made use of by his master respecting Lord Dunallan, the evening previous to their meeting at —— Farm. He answered that, on that evening, St Clair had called his servants, and said to them, "I mean to go abroad immediately. I wish two of you to accompany me. I shall positively leave England as



speedily as I possibly can after to-morrow morning." He had said also in turning away, and supposing he was left alone, "Dunallan shall not live. This time I shall be able to secure revenge—revenge which shall be felt by you too, Catharine." "Shocking!" was murmured through the court. St Clair became very pale. Two other servants confirmed this part of the evidence. Mrs St Clair drew her breath long and deeply two or three times, and after a violent struggle with her emotion, sobbed convulsively aloud; then uttering a piercing scream, put her hand to her head, and starting from her seat with a look of frenzy, stretched out her arms towards her son, and in a wild and loud voice exclaimed, "Arthur! my son! save him, save him!" The whole court became confused. Some officers of justice approached, and placed themselves near St Clair, who had started up on hearing his mother's voice. It was with the greatest difficulty that several gentlemen succeeded in carrying Mrs St Clair to her carriage. When we got near the door I saw Lord Dunallan, who kept off the crowd, but did not approach. I suppose he feared Mrs St Clair would recognize him. When Mrs St Clair reached her own house she was quite delirious. A physician was immediately sent for, who has ordered her to be kept perfectly quiet. I wished to remain with her, but she did not know me, and screamed dreadfully whenever I approached her. She continues to talk without a moment's pause. The doctor hopes she will wear herself out and fall asleep: but should she awake to a full sense of her son's situation, I fear she will again relapse into the same dreadful state.'

Miss Morven with difficulty finished her account of what she had witnessed. Catharine listened, pale and trembling, and terrified. She attempted to speak, but could not, and all continued silent for a few moments.

'There is but one way of regaining composure of mind,' said Miss Morven. 'God alone can give us right views of his providence at such times. This unfortunate mother! but He is wise, and just, and good in all his ways, however dark and awful they may appear to his ignorant creatures.'

'Wretched mother! wretched St Clair!' exclaimed Catharine. 'What do you think will be the end of this trial, Miss Morven?'



‘O! I cannot bear to look forward. Let us trust every future event to God,’ replied Miss Morven. ‘May He have mercy on that unhappy hardened being! Had you seen him to-day! how haughty his looks! at least during the first part of his trial, for they were greatly changed before I left the court; though still he attempted to look defiance and contempt on all around him.’

‘When will it be over?’ asked Catharine.

‘It is impossible to say.’

‘Did Dunallan seem perfectly well when you last saw him?’

‘Perfectly so. He looked mild and calm as an angel, though much shocked, and very sad.’

The evening passed on. Ten o’clock, eleven, twelve, and Dunallan did not appear. Catharine’s anxiety became almost overpowering. She had sent one servant after another to inquire whether the trial was over. The last messenger did not return, though he had been much longer absent than necessary. She now sent another, and herself watched at an open window for the approach of every carriage or sound of footsteps on the now almost deserted streets. Sufficient time for the return of the last messenger passed away, but he did not appear. Miss Morven entreated Catharine to be composed, representing the impossibility of St Clair having it in his power at such a time to injure Dunallan.

‘You do not know St Clair,’ was Catharine’s only reply—while she stood listening, almost in a state of distraction, to the sound of carriages which rolled past at a distance.

At last one seemed to approach rapidly. It entered the square. Catharine flew down stairs, followed by her friends. The street door was opened by a servant, who had also been watching below. The carriage stopped, and Dunallan instantly pushed open the door, and jumped out. On perceiving Catharine he stopped abruptly. She rushed forward.

‘Ah Dunallan! you are safe. My God, I thank Thee!’

He clasped her closely to his heart, but in agitation and in silence. She felt as he supported her on the stairs, that he trembled violently. They entered the drawing-room together. Catharine looked at Dunallan. He was very pale, and an expression of horror was on his countenance.



‘Dunallan! What has happened? Is St Clair ——.’

He shuddered, and turned away.

Catharine followed him. ‘What dreadful event has happened, Dunallan?’

‘My Catharine, are you prepared? No you cannot! How shall I ——?’ He clasped his hands in agony.

‘Oh, merciful Father, make us to feel thy presence—support us—give us to believe in thy unerring wisdom and justice.’ He stopped.

‘We cast ourselves on thy compassion. Oh Lord—reconcile us to thy will. Bring good out of this dreadful event ——.’

Catharine trembled violently. Dunallan prayed in short and hurried sentences, but he became more calm as he proceeded. At last he prayed for pity on the unhappy parent who had so suddenly, so dreadfully, been deprived of her wretched son.

‘What do you mean, Dunallan? What did you say?’

‘My dearest Catharine, you are prepared for something very shocking. The unhappy St Clair is no more.’

‘No more! Is he dead, Dunallan?’

‘He is, my love. Be composed, my Catharine.’

‘But how, Dunallan! Ah, I guess ——.’ She put her hand on her forehead. Dunallan was alarmed. He soothingly drew her into his bosom, and in the gentlest terms attempted to raise her thoughts to the all-wise Ruler of events.

‘Well, my dear Dunallan, tell us all. I shall imagine every thing dreadful till I know the truth.’

‘You shall know every thing, my dearest Catharine. After Miss Morven left the court with the unfortunate Mrs St Clair, the servant proceeded in giving his evidence. Each interrogation produced an answer more fatal to St Clair than the preceding. I fear he really intended the worst that was suspected. Wretched! miserable being!’ Dunallan with difficulty, proceeded. ‘Clanmar, Cameron, and myself were examined. I thank Heaven that my evidence in neither case went to criminate him. That, however, was of no avail. The evidence given by his servants too clearly proved his guilt. After all the witnesses were examined, St Clair was informed that then was the time to offer his defence. He then rose, and said he wished to put one



question to me. I was requested to return into the court. St Clair's lawyers would have come forward, but he himself stood up, and for a moment looked round on the crowd. There was something wild and irresolute in his looks. Several of the attendants of the court stood near him. He waved his hand impatiently for them to stand off, and the judge in pity of his apparent embarrassment, motioned to them to obey, and they left him quite unguarded. He then fixed his eyes on the judge, and said in a low and deep tone of voice,

“My Lord, I have a defence to make which will free me from all disgrace ——.” He then turned to where I was. “My Lord, this is my defence.” He, in an instant, put his hand to his breast—drew a pistol which he fired at me—and before he could be stopped, put the muzzle of another into his mouth, and fell into the arms of those who had rushed forward to seize him. All was over in a few dreadful moments. The ball fired at me entered the wall behind me—no one was hurt.’

‘O God, I thank Thee!’ exclaimed Catharine, in the deepest tone of gratitude, while her countenance remained pale, and expressive of the utmost horror.

Mrs Clanmar, Miss Morven, and Rose, were equally shocked. Mrs Clanmar inquired for her husband.

‘He has gone with Cameron to Mrs St Clair’s, to inform her friends of this dreadful event.’

Clanmar soon appeared. Mrs St Clair, he said, still continued quite delirious, raving incessantly about her son.

Rose now expressed some anxiety respecting her mother. ‘Are you sure, Miss Morven, that she was to call here for me?’

‘Yes, quite so. But she promised not to leave Lady Fitzhenry, who was dreadfully shocked by Mrs St Clair’s illness.’

Dunallan started—‘Shocked! how did it affect her, Miss Morven?’

‘Unfortunate creature!’ replied Miss Morven, ‘even I could not help feeling for her, though Mrs St Clair’s situation was so dreadful. When we went to Mrs St Clair’s house, we found Lady Fitzhenry had arrived there before us, for she had shrunk from going in the same carriage with the poor sufferer. Mrs St Clair seemed pleased when she approached her, though she



addressed her in the wildest terms. Lady Fitzhenry, however, seemed in horror when we proposed her remaining with poor Mrs St Clair, till some of her own friends should come to her. "For Heaven's sake do not ask me!" exclaimed she—"I should soon be in the same situation—I feel it!—I feel it!" and she clung to me in such terror, that I dreaded she was right, and hurried her to a distance from the painful scene. I attempted to soothe her, and she soon burst into tears, and turned away from me, saying—"Forgive me, Miss Morven, I know you feel my presence pollution." Mrs Lennox just then entered; Lady Fitzhenry entreated her to accompany her home—"I cannot spend this day alone!" said she, shuddering.

'Mrs Lennox hesitated, and named Sir Henry Moncton—"you distract me by mentioning him at this moment!" exclaimed she, wildly. I entreated Mrs Lennox to accompany her. Perhaps she supposes you are gone home, Rose; or they may have heard ——.'

'They must have heard what has happened,' said Dunallan. 'Oh! if this dreadful event should awaken' —— he stopt—and Miss Morven and Rose soon after thought themselves obliged to take leave.

When Catharine was alone with Dunallan, he again sought consolation from Heaven, and thus succeeded in calming his own and her spirits. After having conversed over all that had passed, and Catharine had entreated Dunallan to tell her every particular,—

'What a day you have spent!' exclaimed she, 'I dread its effects, my dear Dunallan. How much misery one guilty being can produce!'

Dunallan sighed deeply, but remained silent. 'Oh, Dunallan, how much happier would you have been had you never known me! I have only been the occasion of one misery after another to you.'

'You, Catharine! you are my first earthly blessing. I would not exchange your sweet affection—your dear confidence, for all else that the world contains. I only wish I was deserving of your tenderness, my too, too partial love.'

'Partial! Dunallan?'



‘If you thought of me as I deserve, Catharine, you would not feel thus kindly for me. But God has this day awfully reminded me of my unworthiness, and of his mercy.’

‘How, my dear Dunallan?’

‘When, my love, I rose to witness against another, who do you think stood exactly opposite to me? The guilty, unhappy Aspasia! She wished me to see her, and to feel all the misery at that moment which she knows her continued guilt occasions me. Had she seen my heart she would have been satisfied. Oh how my sins returned upon me at that moment in all their most guilty colours! I felt as if those around me meant to mock me by their respect and attentions, while the invisible Searcher of hearts seemed to be calling to my remembrance, that he against whom I stood up to witness was, at least in His sight, no more guilty than I had been. The same awful voice that pronounced, amidst surrounding terrors, “Thou shalt do no murder,” immediately added, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” Oh, had the prayers for St Clair which my heart poured out to Heaven, while my lips witnessed against him—had they been heard! but all—all must be best.’

Catharine and Dunallan next morning determined to set out for Arnmore as soon as they possibly could. Dunallan himself went at an early hour to inquire for Mrs St Clair.

‘She is now quiet,’ replied he, on his return, to Catharine’s inquiries, ‘but the physicians have a bad opinion of her case. She is not ill in health, but deranged in intellect. Her brother and sister are with her. I saw the former. He thanked me for the manner in which I had given my evidence. He lamented the fate of his unhappy nephew; but seemed to have been little acquainted with him; and appeared more anxious about the disgrace he had brought on his family than any thing else. He seemed to hope the manner of his death would, in some degree, do this away,—so differently do men of the world judge from the word of God.’

‘And now, my Catharine,’ added Dunallan, ‘we may leave this London.’

During the day Catharine took leave of her friends; but only for a short time. They all promised to follow her to Scotland,



and visit Arnmore in less than a fortnight; even Rose Lennox could make this promise with her mother's consent. Miss Morven accounted for this by saying, that she had informed Mrs Lennox that Mr Walderford was also going to Scotland, and by some other means Mrs Lennox had ascertained that Mr Walderford's fortune was even greater than that of his cousin, Mr Dudley.

In the evening all was in readiness, and Catharine when again shut into the carriage with Dunallan, and rapidly hastening from the scene of her late terror and misery, felt her heart become less burdened every moment. Dunallan participated in her feelings.

'How beautiful! how charming!' exclaimed Catharine continually, when, clear of the town, they proceeded through a delightful country, now clothed with all the luxuriance of the first days of summer. The evening was very fine, and its balmy air, and the glories of the setting sun, excited feelings in Catharine's breast, more than usually powerful, from their long suppression while confined to a sick-room in a melancholy street.

'O who would live in a town!' exclaimed she: 'half our feelings, our most pleasurable feelings, are lost!'

Yet the recollection of the miserable St Clair soon overcame these feelings of rapture. He, too, had been exquisitely alive to the beauties of nature—to the glories of such scenes as she now beheld. What now were his ——? She made an effort to banish them from her thoughts, but in vain. Dunallan, too, sat in deep and apparently most painful thought.

They travelled on in the long and calm twilight. At length the moon rose, and softened by its pale light all the surrounding scenery. Its soft influence soothed Catharine's disturbed feelings to perfect peace. For some time Dunallan remained silent. Catharine did not disturb him. Her thoughts, however, were of him. She pictured in her imagination the happiness she should see him enjoy when the present dark cloud had passed away—when he might devote his whole life to the service of that Being who possessed the first place in his affections, without those miserable feelings arising from the dread that he was the cause of rendering any one unhappy,—when he should feel



himself surrounded by those only who loved him. She pictured herself sharing in his happiness. Arnmore with all its romantic beauties, was present to her imagination,—her favourite walks,—Dunallan would now be there with her,—they would pursue all their plans,—all their most serious pursuits,—all their pleasures together. She pictured Mrs Oswald's joy on their return,—she saw the children again in Dunallan's bosom,—she knelt beside him at prayer. A deep sigh from Dunallan interrupted her dream.

‘Why do you sigh so deeply, my dear friend? I think such a scene as this ought to inspire only peaceful, pleasurable feelings.’

‘Tell me what your feelings are then, my Catharine, for I cannot force my thoughts from the dreadful scene of last night. The contrast of this soft and glorious light produces feelings in me more deeply melancholy than I can express. Where were your thoughts, Catharine?’

‘At Arnmore.’

She drew a picture of the future so charming, that she gradually won Dunallan's thoughts from their gloomy subject; and when they stopt, his conversation had, in some degree, regained its usual vivacity.

Each day brought the travellers nearer Arnmore, and seemed to leave their late misery at a greater distance.

At last Catharine's dream was realized. They arrived at Arnmore on a beautiful evening.

The scenery appeared to her even more magnificent than when she had first beheld it. Mrs Oswald's joy was still greater than she expected.

‘My beloved Catharine!’ she exclaimed, as she pressed her again and again to her bosom, ‘dear nurse, wife, every thing! You now feel for Dunallan as I knew you would. My happy nephew!’

‘Your happy niece! you ought to say, my dear aunt,’ replied Catharine tenderly.

‘My aunt is always right,’ said Dunallan, around whose neck the children were fondly clinging.

‘Ah, I did not know you were listening,’ said Catharine



‘ You little ungrateful things,’ added she, joining him in fondling the children, ‘ you always forget me when he is present.’

They clasped their little arms around her neck also. ‘ Dear, dear aunt Dunallan ! ’

Catharine’s dream was still more completely and happily realised, when she again knelt beside Dunallan, while, surrounded by his delighted family, he offered his grateful thanksgivings to Heaven, and implored those blessings and graces for all, necessary to fit them for the duties of life ; and that renovation of soul which should prepare them for the holy joys of an immortal abode in Heaven.

FINIS.



WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR,  
PUBLISHED BY  
WILLIAM OLIPHANT AND SONS,  
EDINBURGH.

---

FATHER CLEMENT. A Roman Catholic Story. Eleventh Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 4s. 6d. cloth.

PROFESSION IS NOT PRINCIPLE: or, the Name of Christian is not Christianity. Seventh Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 3s. 6d. cloth.

PHILIP COLVILLE: A Covenanter's Story. New Edition. With Six Illustrations. 18mo, 2s. 6d. cloth.

THE DECISION: or, Religion must be All or is Nothing. Thirteenth Edition. With Six Illustrations. 18mo, 2s. 6d. cloth.

ANNA ROSS: The Orphan of Waterloo. Tenth Edition. With Six Illustrations. 18mo, 2s. 6d. cloth.

ANDREW CAMPBELL'S VISIT TO HIS IRISH COUSINS. Fourth Edition. 18mo, 1s. cloth.

JESSY ALLAN: The Lame Girl. A Story founded on Facts. Twelfth Edition. 18mo, with Illuminated Cover and Frontispiece, 6d.

THE WORD OF GOD: or, the Word of Man. Addressed to Irish Catholics. Second Edition. 4d.



# WORKS PUBLISHED

BY

WILLIAM OLIPHANT AND SONS,  
EDINBURGH.

---

- Brown's (Rev. John, D.D., Edinburgh) Expository Discourses on the First Epistle of Peter. Second Edition. 2 vols. 8vo, 21s.
- Brown's (Rev. Dr) Discourses and Sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ illustrated in a Series of Expositions. Second Edition, in 3 large vols. 8vo, 31s. 6d.
- Brown's (Rev. Dr) Exposition of the Epistle of Paul, the Apostle, to the Galatians. 8vo, 12s.
- Brown's (Rev. Dr.) The Resurrection of Life: An Exposition of 1st Corinthians xv. With a Discourse on Our Lord's Resurrection. 8vo, 8s.
- Brown's (Rev. Dr) An Exposition of Our Lord's Intercessory Prayer: With a Discourse on the Relation of Our Lord's Intercession to the Conversion of the World. 8vo, 7s.
- Brown's (Rev. Dr) The Sufferings and Glories of the Messiah signified beforehand to David and Isaiah: An Exposition of Psalm xviii., and Isaiah lii. 13-liii. 12. 8vo, 8s.
- Brown's (Rev. Dr) Discourses Suited to the Administration of the Lord's Supper. Third Edition, Enlarged. 8vo, 8s.
- Buchan's (Christiana) History of the Christian Church from the First till the Nineteenth Century. For the use of Schools and Families. Foolscap 8vo, neatly bound, 5s.
- Cathcart (Robert, Esq.), Memoirs of the late, of the East India Company's Civil Service, Madras. Portrait. Foolscap 8vo, 3s. 6d.
- Colligny, Memoirs of Gaspar de, Admiral of France, with an Account of the Massacre of St Bartholomew's Day. By David Dundas Scott, Esq. Foolscap 8vo, 2s. 6d.
- Duncan (Rev. Henry, D.D., of Ruthwell), Memoirs of, Founder of Savings Banks, &c. By his Son, the Rev. George John Duncan. With Portrait and Vignette. Foolscap 8vo, 4s. 6d.
- Duncan's (late Rev. Dr H., of Ruthwell) Sacred Philosophy of the Seasons; illustrating the Perfections of God in the Phenomena of the Year. In Four Volumes on WINTER, SPRING, SUMMER, and AUTUMN, each of which is complete in itself, and is sold separately. Fifth Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 18s.
- Duncan, Memoir of Mrs Mary Lundie: being Recollections of a Daughter by her Mother. Sixth Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 4s. 6d.
- Duncan's (Mrs Mary Lundie) Rhymes for My Children. New Edition, with Six Illustrations. Square 16mo, 1s. cloth.
- Duncan's (Mrs) Missionary Life in Samoa, as exhibited in the Journals of the late George Archibald Lundie, during the Revival in Tutuila in 1840-41. Edited by his Mother. Foolscap 8vo, 3s. 6d.
- Eastern Manners illustrative of the Old Testament History. By the Rev. Robert Jamieson, D.D. of Glasgow. Fourth Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 6s.



## WORKS PUBLISHED BY W. OLIPHANT AND SONS

- Eastern Manners illustrative of the New Testament History. By the same Author. Third Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 6s.
- Greville's (R. K., LL.D.) The Drama Brought to the Test of Scripture and found Wanting. Royal 18mo, 2s. 6d.
- Haynes's (Miss M. S.) Prayers for Morning and Evening Worship, for the Use of Schools and Large Families. Foolscap 8vo, 3s.
- Johnstone (Mrs Ann, Willow Park, Greenock), Memoir of. Second Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 2s. 6d.
- Mylne's (Miss Isabella Gray) Titles and Offices of our Lord Jesus Christ illustrated in a Series of Essays. Two vols. post 8vo, 7s.
- Early Recollections. A Tale. Second Edition, 18mo, 3s. 6d.
- Family (The) at Heatherdale : or, the Influence of Christian Principles. By Mrs Col. Mackay. Third Edition, with Six Illustrations. 18mo, 2s. 6d.
- Harriet and her Cousin : or, Prejudice Overcome. Sixth Edition. 18mo, 2s. 6d.
- Heiress (The) : a Tale. By the Author of Evelyn. 18mo, 3s.
- Kitto's (John, D.D.) Daily Bible Illustrations : being Original Readings for a Year, on Subjects relating to Sacred History, Biography, Geography, Antiquities, and Theology ; especially designed for the Family Circle. Foolscap 8vo, with fine Frontispieces, Vignettes, and Numerous Wood Engravings ; each volume is complete in itself, and sold separately at 6s.
- MORNING SERIES : Vol. I., The Antediluvians and Patriarchs, Fourth Edition ; Vol. II., Moses and the Judges, Second Edition ; Vol. III., Samuel, Saul, and David, Second Edition ; and Vol. IV., Solomon and the Kings. Second Edition.
- EVENING SERIES : Vol. I., Job and the Poetical Books ; Vol. II., Isaiah and the Prophets ; Vol. III., The Life and Death of our Lord ; and Vol. IV., The Apostles and Early Church.
- Little Alfred of Anglesey : a Story for Children. With Four Engravings. 18mo, 2s. 6d.
- Pierre and his Family : a Story of the Waldenses. By the Author of "Lily Douglas." With Six Illustrations. 18mo, 2s. 6d.
- Principles and Practice : or, Stories for Young Persons. 18mo, 2s. 6d.
- Paxton's (late Professor) Illustrations of Scripture from the Geography, Natural History, and Manners and Customs of the East. Third Edition, revised and greatly enlarged, by the Rev. Robert Jamieson, D.D., of Glasgow. 4 vols. foolscap 8vo, 24s.
- Pollok's (Author of "The Course of Time") Tales of the Covenanters. With a Memoir and fine Portrait of the Author, and Plates. Fifth Edition, 3s. 6d.
- Sime's Sacred Geography : or, an Historical and Descriptive Dictionary of every place mentioned in the Bible. Second Edition. Foolscap 8vo, 5s.
- Wallace's (Rev. Alexander, Edinburgh) The Bible and the Working Classes : a Series of Fifteen Lectures addressed to the Working Classes. Fifth Thousand. Foolscap 8vo, 2s. 6d.
- Waugh's (late Rev. Alexander, D.D., of London) Memoirs and Correspondence. By the late Revs. James Hay, D.D., and Henry Belfrage, D.D. Third Edition. Post 8vo, 7s.



















Kennedy, Grace

Dunallan: or, Know what you judge

Edinburgh 1854

Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek -- L.angl.o.69-c  
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11715435-0